

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 327 905

CS 507 385

AUTHOR Hugenberg, Lawrence W., Ed.
TITLE Basic Course Communication Annual. Volume 1.
PUB DATE Nov 89
NOTE 212p.; Published by Academic Press, Boston, MA.
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)
-- Books (010) -- Collected Works - General (020)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC09 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Cognitive Style; Communication Skills; Ethics; Higher Education; *Introductory Courses; *Speech Communication; Teacher Student Relationship; Teaching Assistants; Teaching Methods; Undergraduate Students; Units of Study

IDENTIFIERS *Speech Communication Education

ABSTRACT

This annual collection contains essays relating to the history of basic communication courses, offers insights into basic course pedagogy, and discusses the administration of multisectioned basic communication courses. Papers in the collection include: "The Basic Course in Speech Communication: An Historical Perspective" (Pamela L. Gray); "What We Know about the Basic Course: What Has the Research Told Us?" (William J. Seiler and Drew McGukin); "A Comparison between PSI-Based and Self-Contained Formats of Instruction in the Introductory Speech Communication Course" (Pamela L. Gray and others); "Using Plays and Novels as Case Studies in the Basic Course" (Roger D. Smitter); "A Unit on Relationship Termination in the Basic Course" (Lynn A. Phelps); "Teaching Ethics in the Basic Survey Speech Communication Course" (William A. Haskins); "The Necessity of Separating Idealized Accountability from Realized Accountability: A Case Study" (Karen J. Greenberg); "Implications of Student and Instructor Involvement in the Basic Course" (Sam Wallace and Don B. Morlan); "The Interaction of Teacher and Student Social Styles and Learning Styles on Learning Outcomes of the Basic Communication Course" (Michael Smilowitz and Lynn A. Phelps); "Training or Teaching: A Professional Development Program for Graduate Teaching Assistants" (Douglas M. Trank); and "Teaching Basic Courses: Problems and Solutions" (Richard L. Weaver II and Howard W. Cotrell). (RS)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED327905

CS507385

Basic Course Communication Annual

Lawrence W. Hugenberg
Editor

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

*Lawrence W.
Hugenberg,
Ed.*

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve
reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this docu-
ment do not necessarily represent official
OERI position or policy.

Volume I
November, 1989

BASIC COURSE COMMUNICATION ANNUAL

**Volume 1
November, 1989**

EDITOR
Lawrence W. Hugenberg

**Published by
Academic Library
Boston, Massachusetts**

Copyright © 1989 by Academic Library

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Printed in the United States of America.

*Dedicated
to everyone who has taught
a basic communication course.*

Editorial Board

Editor

Lawrence W. Hugenberg
Youngstown State University

Associate Editor

Samuel P. Wallace
University of Dayton

Manuscript Reviewers

Richard H. Arthur
Slippery Rock State University

Kathleen M. German
Miami University

Kathleen M. Kougl
Youngstown State University

Alfred W. Owens, II
Youngstown State University

William J. Seiler
University of Nebraska

Douglas M. Trank
University of Iowa

Beth M. Waggenpack
Virginia Tech

Donald D. Yoder
University of Dayton

Editor's Page

This volume is the result of many years of work by members of the Basic Course Committee of the Speech Communication Association. Individually, there are too many people to thank, but I would like to recognize the efforts and support of two people. The first person I would like to thank is Norm Watson, the former Chair of the Basic Course Committee, who supported my efforts to secure a publisher and proceed with developing this outlet dedicated to the research and scholarship of individuals concerned with the basic course in speech communication. The second person I want to thank is Malcolm Fox, Editor for Academic Library, for having enough confidence in our work to publish this and future annuals reporting research in the basic communication course.

I am excited about this inaugural *Basic Course Annual*. The essays published in this volume are exciting and form a solid foundation upon which future editions of *The Annual* will rest. There are a variety of essays included — some related to the history of the basic course, others offering insights into basic course pedagogy, and others discussing the administration of multi-sectioned basic communication courses.

Finally, the work of the manuscript reviewers cannot go unmentioned. Each of them worked diligently to complete reviews on time and offer valuable insights into each submission. I am certain everyone who received reviews would testify to their thoroughness and appreciates the assistance offered by each reviewer. With such a competent set of reviewers, the selection of essays, although a difficult task, was easier than I had anticipated.

I hope each of you enjoy reading this volume as much as I enjoyed working on it.

Lawrence W. Hugenberg
Editor

Contents

Basic Course History

- "The Basic Course in Speech Communication:
An Historical Perspective" 1**
Pamela L. Gray

The purpose of this paper is to trace some of the changes that have taken place in the basic course in speech communication through the use of representative literature concerning the basic course. In addition, a direction for the future, indicated by the literature, will be suggested. This paper should serve as both an historical perspective of this course and a summary of the changes that may have occurred as this course has responded to philosophical/intellectual and/or pragmatic pressures.

- "What We Know about the Basic Course:
What Has the Research Told Us?" 28**
William J. Seiler and Drew McGukin

Research in the basic speech communication course is vital to our understanding of what we know about it, how it is administered and taught. The paper examines theoretical as well as empirical literature relevant to the basic course. Our examination suggests that the literature is deplete of a consistent base of knowledge on which to design the basic course. The paper concludes by discussing a proposal for systematic research to help provide a foundation for teaching and administering the basic course.

Pedagogy in the Basic Course

- "A Comparison between PSI-Based and
and Self-Contained Formats of Instruction
in the Introductory Speech Communication Course" . . . 43**

Pamela L. Gray, Nancy L. Buerkel-Rothfuss
and Richard W. Thomas

This study assesses differences between two instructional methods in a basic speech communication course: a modified Personalized System of Instruction (PSI) and a self contained format. Communication skills, communication apprehension, self-esteem, and academic achievement in, perceptions about, and satisfaction with the course are compared. Using t-tests to compare means and mean exchange scores, the PSI-based format was found to be more effective than the self-contained format. Comparing these data with an earlier study designed to compare the PSI-based format with more traditional lecture-recitation format, the self-contained approach appears to be a better alternative than the lecture-recitation for teaching the course, but the PSI-based model was still clearly superior to both alternatives.

- "Using Plays and Novels as Case Studies
in the Basic Course" . . . 70**

Roger D. Smitter

"Using Plays and Novels as Case Studies in the Basic Course" presents a rationale for the use of case studies and the case study method in the undergraduate speech communication classroom. Examples are provided for using plays and novels. The advantages and disadvantages of using plays and novels as cases are presented.

- "A Unit on Relationship Termination
in the Basic Course" . . . 82**

Lynn A. Phelps

Basic interpersonal communication courses stress relationship development but seldom address the concept of

relationship termination. If addressed, termination is often viewed from a negative perspective. Yet in today's mobile society, the concept that a person will continue to develop new relationships throughout their life without terminating any of their previous relationships is ludicrous at best. The purpose of this article is to suggest units on relationship termination which are appropriate for the basic communication course.

"Teaching Ethics in the Basic Survey Speech Communication Course"	95
William A. Haskins	

The teaching of ethics in speech communication courses is not new to most communication curriculums. Emphasis upon teaching ethics in speech communication courses, however, appears to be growing. Attention on the teaching of ethics appears to be growing as well as in many basic speech communication classes. This paper, then, provides general suggestions on teaching ethics in a basic speech communication course.

"The Necessity of Separating Idealized Accountability from Realized Accountability: A Case Study"	106
Karen J. Greenberg	

This essay presents the hidden distinction between the idealized accountability and the realized accountability of the basic communication course. It illuminates this difference as this difference is evidenced in the ethical dimension of the rhetoric of basic communication course instructors' manuals. Contrary to popular myth, the basic communication course does not aim to reinforce the importance of the creation and maintenance of students' or instructors' identities, but aims to reinforce the importance of the creation and maintenance of educational systems. That is, this course mystifies one type of social hierarchy rather than elucidating many.

The Basic Course Instructor

- "Implications of Student and Instructor
Involvement in the Basic Course" 134**
Sam Wallace and Don B. Morlan

The purpose of the study is to test the notion that students in the basic course who possess high levels of communication competence will perform better in and subsequently will be more satisfied with the course than their counterparts with low levels of competence. Results show no support for the initial hypothesis. Further analysis, however, showed that the level of instructor competence has a significant effect on student evaluation of instructors.

- "The Interaction of Teacher and Student Social Styles
and Learning Styles on Learning Outcomes
of the Basic Communication Course" 150**
Michael Smilowitz and Lynn A. Phelps

There has been considerable research that indicates the importance of the type and quality of teachers' communication. Too little of this research has considered the possibility of interrelationships between teacher's social and preferred learning styles with the social and preferred learning styles of students. This study examines students in basic communication courses for the effects of actual correspondence in styles as well as students' accuracy in describing the styles of their teachers. The results indicate that accurate perceptions of teachers' social styles influence course grades and actual correspondence influences student evaluations of the course.

Directing the Basic Course

- "Training or Teaching: A Professional Development Program for Graduate Teaching Assistants" 169**
Douglas M. Trank

Basic course directors are urged to consider the range of roles available to them in working with graduate teaching assistants. The key element in establishing an effective professional development program is the development of an appropriate atmosphere where the graduate instructors know they are viewed as valuable members of the faculty. Such a program must remain flexible enough to meet the needs of the graduate instructors and the department it serves. Treating graduate instructors as colleagues and involving them in the process, giving them power and freedom, and valuing the teaching they do benefits the students, the graduate instructors, the faculty, and the university.

- "Teaching Basic Courses: Problems and Solutions" 184**
Richard L. Weaver II and Howard W. Cotrell

Basic speech courses enroll many students. Basic course instructors are often under great pressure to succeed and to be effective. Because of the numbers of students and the pressures, they experience many problems. Five are discussed in this article: rigor versus leniency, independence versus dependence, theory versus skills, being close versus being distant, and objective evaluation versus subjective evaluation. Solutions to these problems are likely to affect both student and instructor motivation. Solutions are also likely to affect how students perceive instructors. That's why, with respect to basic course instructors, you have to have solutions for the problems.

- Author Identification* 197**

The Basic Course in Speech Communication: An Historical Perspective

Pamela L. Gray

"Nothing endures but change" (Bartlett 1968, 77). Heraclitus' words spoken over 2,000 years ago have a certain undeniable truth for us today. Our advanced technologies have brought the nations of the world into closer proximity and opened up new worlds to explore, thus necessitating rapid and complex changes in people in order to adapt. We no longer have to wait for a generation to pass by for a "gap" to occur; people only a few years apart in age have trouble understanding jargon, pop music references, etc.

Coping with the need to adapt is a challenge that faces all aspects of society, but perhaps most notably is the field of education. If our broad goal in education is to prepare people to function effectively in their world, then education must reflect the demands to be faced in that world.

Nowhere do the implications of change weigh heavier in higher education than the field of speech communication. As society changes, so does the need to adapt our personal communication skills in order to adjust. In 1977, Wallace Bacon, then President of the Speech Communication Association, stated:

I believe that we are central to the aims of higher education, today even more than in the past. While I trust that instruction in subject matter will remain the domain of colleges and universities, it seems clear enough that we are no longer training scholars largely to talk to other scholars. Institutions are facing the task of teaching men and women to interact with others in the day-to-day world outside their walls (10).

A variety of communication skills seem to be impacted by societal changes. Increased mobility has lessened our ability to rely on childhood friends to provide an interpersonal support structure for later life. Changing roles in male/female interactions have made reliance on childhood norms and expectations unworkable. Therefore, interpersonal competence increasingly is becoming a skill that is essential to our social and career well-being. Public speaking skills may take on a role of greater importance in such a society. The small businessperson is often being replaced by large corporate structures and with this change brings the desirability of personnel who can function effectively in group settings. Therefore, interpersonal, public speaking and small group competence increasingly are becoming critical skills to have.

As our way of life has changed, so has the field of speech communication. The course offerings at colleges and universities have grown from courses in voice and diction and public speaking to a vast array of courses in communication and law, the rhetoric of advertising and freedom of speech to name but a few. The national organization has expanded from a group of seventeen discontented members of the National Council of Teachers of English (Bryant 1971) to a thriving organization of thousands with eleven major divisions and twenty-five commissions, sections, caucuses, and committees serving the diverse interests of the members, as outlined in *Spectra*, the newsletter of the national organization in speech communication (1988).

It would be reasonable to expect that the basic course in speech communication at colleges and universities also has undergone major changes. The basic course is defined as "that course either required or recommended for a significant number of undergraduates or that course which the department has or would recommend as a requirement for all or most undergraduates" (Gibson, Gruner, Hanna, Smythe, and Hayes 1980, 1). The basic course has become a focal point for any speech communication department. Hargis (1956) states the following:

... in numbers of students and faculty involved, the beginning course outweighs all others. It is the only class in speech which a majority of students elect, and hence offers them their sole opportunity for speech training. Here the student receives indoctrination with a basic philosophy or oral communication, the impression of which persists whether or not he undertakes further study. It is generally on the basis of this one course that members of other departments of a college or university judge the value of speech in the college curriculum. And, for those of us who teach speech, it is significant as the foundation for advanced work in the department (26).

White, Minnick, Van Dusen, and Lewis (1954) echo similar thoughts: "Since most students enroll only for this first course, to a considerable extent it is here that we earn prestige for our discipline and respect for ourselves as valuable members of the teaching community" (163).

All of this information leads to the conclusion that changes in the world and in the discipline of speech communication should be reflected in the basic speech communication course. This course is highly valuable to the students and to the speech communication profession and so it needs to be kept current with societal needs and expectations. The purpose of this paper is to trace some of the changes that have taken place in the basic course through the use of representative literature concerning the basic course. In addition, a direction for the future, indicated by the literature, will be suggested. Further importance of this inquiry was stated by Gibson, Hanna, and Huddleston (1985): "What is occurring in the basic course appears to be a reflection of the thinking, generally, of teachers and scholars in . . . our discipline. So, to trace the history of course orientations is, to some extent, to trace the history of thought in our discipline" (283).

Focus of Early Research

Concern with the basic course has persisted throughout the history of our discipline. White et al. (1954) remind us

that consideration of the objectives and nature of the first course in speech "antedates the formation in November, 1914, of the National Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking, and since that time it has been a perennial subject for articles in our journals and papers at regional and national meetings" (163).

What should be the content emphasis of the basic speech course? These two basic questions were pondered by the earliest of researchers and many factors influenced the answers they reached. However, two factors stand out as noteworthy: differing philosophies and economic pressures.

Differing Philosophies

In 1954, White edited a symposium presenting three professionals in the field, Lewis, Minnick and Van Dusen, and their approaches to the content emphasis of the first speech course (White et al. 1954). All three claimed two basic premises in common: the first speech course that students take is likely to be the only speech course they ever take and therefore the first speech course should aim at the basic needs of students. This, however, is where the agreement ended.

Lewis took the broadest design: the communications approach.¹ He felt that since "this first course will be, for most students, the last course as well, it seems reasonable that it should drive towards the most pressing need of all students" (167). For Lewis, this "pressing need" indicated an eclectic philosophy. He stressed four characteristics of his approach:

- (1) the students will be given many opportunities to practice, (2) the emphasis will be upon content rather than form, upon clarity rather than artistry, (3) training will be given in listening as well as in speaking and reading, and (4) training will be offered in several of the types of oral communication (168).

Minnick rebelled against such a broad scope for the basic course. He claimed the following:

Some educators have high hopes for the first speech course. They expect it to do many things — teach students to listen critically, to act naturally and purposefully, to speak with cultured, animated voices, to read aloud with a strong sense of communicativeness, to discover and evaluate evidence, to reason correctly, to organize speech materials with unity, coherence, and emphasis, and, not content with these, they expect to attain a number of additional goals which I have no space to enumerate. All of these are laudable aims, without doubt, and if they were attained, we should have no need for other courses in the speech curriculum. But I am afraid that in our efforts to do much we often succeed merely in doing little (164).

For Minnick, the "pressing need" steered him toward a specific course design: the public speaking approach. Minnick stated that too often "we forget that the foremost requirement for effective participation in a democratic society is persuasive speaking in public" (165). This strong belief translated to a first speech course that "is dedicated to the purpose of training young people to speak the truth honestly and to speak it well" (165). Minnick even offered a clear example to support his philosophy. If his arguments failed to be convincing then the need for more skillful and persuasive public speakers was supported all the more strongly!

Van Dusen argued for the third design: the voice and diction approach. Basing his feelings on testing of entering freshmen and transfer students, Van Dusen stated:

Because of the large number of persons whose voice and/or diction required improvement each year, I have come to believe that these two factors should receive attention before the student enters upon subjects which stress platform appearances (166).

Van Dusen saw that 25.5% of his school's population needed training in voice and diction and so perceived this as the "pressing need." He advocated separate courses in voice training and diction so students could elect to take a course based on their individual needs. Van Dusen felt that training

in voice and diction was "fundamental" for students interested in drama and radio-television and such training allowed all students to proceed to further speech courses with greater confidence. On the whole, "it seems advisable that such help should be offered early so as to give students the basis for good speech in all situations" (167).

From this early research, it seems apparent that much diversity of opinion existed concerning the content emphasis of the basic course.

Economic Pressures

Another factor that influenced the basic course was economic pressures. Change in the basic course seemed inevitable, not only because society was changing, but because economic influences threatened to affect the basic course. It seems commonplace today for us to feel pressured by spiraling costs and subsequent economic cutbacks in education, but it is interesting to note that these problems have been with us for a number of years.

Focusing on the college level, White (1953) saw an educational program that was "a somewhat untidy medley of packed lecture halls, I.B.M. — corrected examinations, capsule curricula, and of emphasis upon rote rather than upon thinking" (247). Both men saw as the root of these evils a lack of financial support.

Overall, the literature suggests two assumptions about the basic course: 1) the differing philosophies espoused by Lewis, Minnick and Van Dusen indicate a lack of consensus about what should be emphasized in the basic course and so a wide variety of content emphases would be expected throughout the country and 2) widespread change in the world and in the field of communication, coupled with increasing economic pressures, would force the basic course to respond by changing considerably in terms of instructional format, also. Surprisingly, a closer look at the basic course in speech communication from the 1950s to date does not show clear support for these assumptions. Specifically, literature was analyzed for information

concerning two areas: the content emphasis and the instructional characteristics. In the content emphasis, the primary topic or topics covered in class were discerned. In the instructional characteristics, such things as the class size, the ranks of the teachers instructing sections of the course, the credits earned for taking the course, whether or not the course was required for graduation and the format of the course (self-contained with one instructor per small group, lecture-recitation with a mass lecture and smaller lab groups, etc.) were analyzed.

The State of the Basic Course

A study begun in 1954 appeared in the literature in 1956.

As its project for 1954 the Committee on Problems in Undergraduate Study of the Speech Association of America ventured to answer the question, "What is the first course in speech?" This was not an attempt to determine what it should be ideally, but, rather, to discover what the course is as now taught (Hargis 1956, 26).

Hargis, the chairperson, reported the results of a questionnaire sent to 440 chairpersons, of whom 229 responded. The results painted the content emphasis of the basic course in speech as a course "usually in the area of public speaking with an occasional variant offering such as fundamentals or voice" (32). While in debate, radio, speech science, acting and others were sometimes included, students "work on certain non-public speaking units apparently, not for their own sakes, but as a means of developing public speaking skills" (32). In instruction, 71% of the respondents stressed practice over theory. Since over 74% of the class time was spent in practice activities, the course was basically a skills course.

The instructional characteristics depicted the basic course as typically a three credit hour semester course. It "serves both as a terminal course and as preparation for advanced work; for the majority it is a prerequisite to all

other offerings in the department" (31). It was planned for all students and was required for graduation in 42% of the colleges and universities surveyed. The class size ranged from ten to forty students with the average class containing 21.7 students (27-28).

In 1958, Hostettler researched the area of teaching methods in speech communication. While this study did not focus exclusively on the basic course, the basic course was included and the information gathered has continuing application. Hostettler surveyed approximately 250 institutions while serving on the Interest Group on Administrative Policies and Practices of the Speech Association of America. Hostettler's goal was to ascertain, from the 118 replies, "what new teaching procedures may already be in use or are planned" (99). He believed that change was desperately called for and that the hope of the discipline was "in the discovery of new teaching methods — methods which not only will enable experienced staff members to reach more students, but will not debase academic standards" (99).

Despite this strong foreboding, only 53% of the respondents "reported they were planning for, experimenting with, or had already established new teaching methods" (100). The word "new" however, was misleading since "the survey failed to uncover many ideas that can be termed 'radical' or that represented marked departures from procedures already accepted in academic circles" (100). A few departments planned to increase section size grudgingly, but few reported an increase greater than from 20 to 25 students in a section. Ohio State was the only institution that reported experimenting with large class sizes, most notably up to 70 in a performance course. Hostettler expressed disdain for such a change. "Such numbers, of course, challenge traditional standards for competent instruction in speech skills. Careful and continued testing will be necessary before such class sizes will be accepted by the profession generally" (101).

Actually, the teaching methods reported almost all had major flaws in Hostettler's analysis. Graduate student use was growing, especially the use of candidates for the Master's degree. Hostettler stated that the "relative inexperience of these new teachers may well result in lowered calibre of instruction"(101). Likewise, the use of undergraduate majors to grade some speeches was deemed "a plan which would bring our academic standing under serious and justified criticism"(102). Taping speeches outside of class was suggested, but Hostettler cited an increase in faculty time outside of class and the lack of a real audience as major arguments against such an alternative. Equally unappealing were ideas presented that would restrict enrollment in basic speech courses to students with speech defects and other problems and plans that called for delivering speeches to outside community groups. Hostettler saw some merit in letting better students go on to advanced courses and reexamining the amount and frequency of offerings at the advanced level so that "experienced teachers can take on more sections of basic courses"(102).

The lecture-recitation method, was the only one Hostettler did see as a possibility for the future. This method allowed for a large lecture group of about 100 students taught by one instructor and meeting one hour per week, with the other two hours of weekly meeting times using a recitation format of about 25 in a group. While not actually stated by Hostettler, other literature suggests that the norm at this time was a classroom of about 25 students that met three hours a week with one instructor (see Hargis 1956; White, Minnick, Van Dusen, and Lewis 1954). This change to the lecture-recitation method would reduce the instruction time by 25% (Hostettler 1958, 101). When coupled with the use of graduate students leading the small recitation groups, Hostettler felt that the "lecture-recitation procedure may well prove to be the best solution of our impending difficulties, permitting us to handle more students without seriously lowering academic standards"(102).

As represented through the research reviewed, the literature of the 1950s depicted the content of the typical basic course in speech communication as predominantly a

course in public speaking. The instructional characteristics that dominated were common ones in education: sections of approximately 20-25 students met with one instructor for three hours per week (apparently on the semester system) for three credits worth of study. The argument for the lecture-recitation effectiveness made by Hostettler did not seem to have permeated the field yet. However, Hostettler may have set a goal for the future.

The 1960s brought new searches into the content and instructional characteristics of the basic course. In 1963, Dedmon and Frandsen (1964) surveyed 925 departments of speech. Four-hundred and six replies showed that, content-wise, a "course in public speaking is by far the most frequently required first course in speech in colleges and universities in the United States" (37). In the realm of instructional characteristics, the researchers noted that a first course in speech was required in more than half of the responding schools. Class size, instructional ranks of teachers, instructional format and credit value were not reported.

London's survey of 670 institutions in 1963 yielded 495 responses. This survey revealed that the content area included most often, in fact by 93.46% of the schools, was extemporaneous speaking. It received major emphasis in the first course in speech in 78.81% of the schools, a figure that was more than three times as large as any other single content area (29-30).

In terms of instructional characteristics, London reported that the basic course was usually a one-semester-long course worth three credits that met three hours a week. The class size was usually twenty students with the larger schools preferring class sizes of twenty-five. The course was required for graduation in one-third of the schools, was required for most degree candidates in one-sixth of the schools, and was required for some degree candidates in another one-third of the schools (29).

In 1967, the Undergraduate Speech Instruction Interest Group of the Speech Association of America charged a group of researchers to discover the status of the basic course (Gibson, Gruner, Brooks, and Petrie 1970, 13). Gibson,

Gruner, Brooks and Petrie contacted 887 schools in 1968 and 564 colleges and universities replied. Their inquiry revealed that little had changed in the basic course. Although the titles of the basic course seemed to indicate a trend away from public speaking to a communications approach in the content emphasis, the evidence once again led "one to suspect that whatever the declared emphasis or title of the basic course, the course content centers around public speaking" (15). In the area of instructional characteristics, the course was usually a three-credit course taught for three hours per week for one semester. The class size remained at about 17 to 22 students, resisting the "move toward large sections so common in the basic courses of other disciplines" (17). The basic course was required for graduation in 40% of the schools responding. An increasing number of graduate students was being used to teach the basic course. While not stated directly, the assignments noted seemed to indicate a self-contained format as being the preferred method.

As represented through the research reviewed, the literature of the 1960s reflected little of the change taking place in the world and the speech communication discipline. The radical changes in technology (as illustrated by the moon landing) and the social upheaval taking place (as on college campuses after the military incident at Kent State) would seem to necessitate an effect on a field like communication. However, the summary of the 1950s would be just as true for the summary of the 1960s. As cited earlier in this paper, the course was:

... predominantly a course in public speaking. This was the content approach advocated by Minnick. Lewis' broad-based communications approach to the basic course content was far less prevalent and Van Dusen's appeal for voice and diction was used infrequently. . . . The instructional characteristics that dominated were common ones in education: sections of approximately 20-25 students met with one instructor for three hours per week (apparently on the semester system) for three credits worth of study. The argument for the lecture-recitation effectiveness made by Hostettler did not seem to have permeated the field yet.

The only change came with the stated emphasis of the course shifting toward a communications approach. However, as was noted earlier, this seemed to be a shift in name only since public speaking continued to dominate the emphasized units of instruction.

The 1970s brought further examination of the basic course in speech communication. Once again, little seemed to have changed. In 1974, Gibson, Kline and Gruner did a follow-up to the 1968 survey by Gibson, Gruner, Brooks and Petrie. In this second survey, 1291 questionnaires were sent and 554 were returned. The content emphasis of the basic course seemed to show "a reduction in courses emphasizing public speaking, fundamentals, and voice and articulation and an increase in courses emphasizing other aspects of communication and a multiple approach. However, the result may be more of a change in name than one in course content" (207-208) since a large amount of class time was still devoted to public speaking presentations. Of the schools responding, 71% required from 4-10 speeches and 21% required 1-4 speeches.

The typical basic course was still offered to all undergraduates, was worth three credits of study and was taught by one instructor with a class size of about 18-22 or slightly higher. Instruction was given by teachers at all ranks and the "charge that the basic course is taught exclusively by junior staff members is not supported by this study" (211). However, the study did show that graduate assistants perform the bulk of the teaching in 17% of the schools, instructors in 40%, assistant professors in 54%, associate professors in 33% and full professors in 21%. Acknowledging that these numbers do not add up to 100%, indicating, to the researchers, that "several schools reported faculty members of more than one rank working in the basic course" (211), the results show a clear preponderance of the instruction weighted toward the graduate assistants and junior faculty. Enrollments were stable or increasing, with increases keeping pace with the growth rates of the institutions.

The third in this series of surveys initiated by the Speech Association of America was begun in 1979 by Gibson,

Gruner, Hanna, Smythe and Hayes (1980). The researchers obtained 552 responses from the 2,794 questionnaires sent out. Few changes were noted. The instructional characteristics showed that the typical basic course was a three-credit-hour course offered to undergraduates. Classes typically were taught in individual sections of 13-30 students by one instructor, with the 18-30 size being the most used. The instructors, however, were drawn more heavily from graduate assistants and junior faculty than was noted in the second survey. Only 14% of the teaching was done by associate professors and 10% by full professors (5). Enrollments were keeping pace with or excelled the growth rate of the institutions. The small, self-contained classes were used in 86% of the schools responding.

The content emphasis of the basic course did, at last, seem to change. "Since the last study, there has been a clear and pronounced shift toward the performance orientation" (9). Public speaking "once again" was the dominant emphasis according to these researchers. However, it must be restated that the apparent move away from performance indicated in the previous study was felt to be inaccurate. In the 1974 study, 21% of the schools required from one to three speeches per student per term, and 71% required from four to ten. In the 1979 survey, 12% required from one to three performance assignments, and 80% from four to ten performances" (3). While an increase reaffirms the traditionally strong thrust towards performance, it hardly shows a major change from the 1974 survey.

In actuality, then, as represented through the research reviewed, the literature of the 1970s showed the basic course as having no substantive changes. The communications approach gained slightly as an approach taken, but it posed no real threat to the public speaking orientation. Voice and diction was losing ground; in fact, it had been dropped as a possible response in the latest survey (2). More junior faculty and graduate students were involved and some courses seemed to utilize larger class sizes, yet these changes did not seem to be major changes adopted by a majority of schools. Again, the summary of the 1950s and the 1960s could be repeated as an accurate summary of the 1970s.

In the 1980s, some experimentation was done into a new teaching technique for the field of speech communication. This research relied on Fred S. Keller's Personalized System of Instruction (PSI) which was first introduced into the field of psychology in 1963. The adaptation of this system to speech communication courses with a performance orientation took time and experimentation. (For more information concerning the PSI model, see Keller, 1974; Keller and Sherman 1974, 1982). While early experimentation with this model in our field began in the 1970s (see Scott and Young 1976), it was the 1980s when numerous researchers tried to adapt this model for performance courses (see Berryman-Fink and Pederson 1981; Buerkel-Rothfuss and Yerby 1982; Fuss-Reineck and Seiler 1982; Gray 1984; Gray, Buerkel-Rothfuss and Thomas 1988; Gray, Buerkel-Rothfuss, and Yerby 1986; Hanisko, Beall, Prentice, and Seiler 1982; Hanna and Gibson 1983; Seiler 1982, 1983; Seiler and Fuss-Reineck 1986; Staton-Spicer and Bassett 1980; and Taylor 1986). However, as Fuss-Reineck and Seiler stated: "To our knowledge, PSI has had little acceptance in speech communication" (1982, 1). Therefore, this potentially significant change did not have much impact on the vast majority of basic courses in speech communication across the nation.

The 1980s also brought the fourth and latest investigation of the basic course sponsored by the Speech Communication Association (SCA) which was conducted in 1983 by Gibson, Hanna and Huddleston (1985). Questionnaires were mailed to the total SCA mailing list of junior, community, and senior colleges and graduate institutions in the United States. Of the 2,078 questionnaires mailed, 552 questionnaires were returned. The start of this decade's research in the basic course did not show many surprises or changes. The instructional characteristics showed that the typical basic course was still an undergraduate course worth three credits of college work. The typical class size ranged from 18-30 students, once again confirming "the finding in each of these investigations that 'small class size' in the basic course appears to be crucial to the individuality of instruction and its interactive nature"

(282). Responses seemed to indicate a continued use of self-contained classes. The promises of the PSI model did not seem to have much of an effect on the national instructional format of choice.

Instruction in the basic course was still weighted toward the newer teachers: graduate assistants (18%), instructors (30%), assistant professors (23%), associate professors (18%), and professors (11%). "On the basis of this investigation more than two thirds of the instruction in this departmental offering is provided by junior faculty members or graduate teaching assistants" (289). In a majority of schools (62%), the basic course is expanding at about the same rate as institutional growth and expansion of the basic course is exceeding overall department growth in 30% of the schools. The major emphases of the course content continued to shift (if, indeed, we ever really turned away) in the direction of public speaking: 54% reported a public speaking orientation compared with 34% who reported a combination of public speaking, interpersonal communication and small group discussion. As noted by the authors, "the percentage of schools taking a Public Speaking approach in their basic course is essentially similar to the status of the basic course when this study was first conducted in 1968" (284).

What can be said of the state of the basic course in the 1980s? The strongest content emphasis is public speaking. In the area of instructional characteristics, class sizes stayed relatively small (18-30), junior faculty and graduate assistants formed the largest core of instructors, and the typical course was a three-credit course using a self-contained format. As represented through the research reviewed, the repetition, once again, of the summary of the 1950s would be quite accurate for the 1980s.

Neither the diversity of content emphases nor the widespread modernizing changes in instructional format expected to be found was uncovered through the literature from the 1950s through the mid-1980s. The following table presented in the Gibson et al. study (1985) shows the comparison of content emphases throughout the four SCA-sponsored investigations of the basic course. It is a vivid example of the lack of change in one significant area: course

content. This is especially noticeable if the argument made earlier concerning the lack of any real move away from public speaking in the 1974 study is recalled.

Percent of Schools Reporting Specific Orientations to the Basic Course				
Orientation	1968	1974	1980	1984
Public Speaking	54.5%	21.3%	51.3%	54%
Fundamentals	21.3%	12.8%		
Combination			40.3%	34%
Multiple	13.2%	39.4%		
Comm. Theory			2.5%	4%
Interpersonal			4.7%	6%
Small Group			.5%	2%
Voice & Diction	2.2%	1.3%		

(Gibson et al. 1985, 283)

Call for Changes in the Basic Course: Intellectual and Pragmatic Reasons

The seeming lack of substantive change gleaned from the literature surveyed raises certain questions. Is the basic course fine as it is? Has the content emphasized in the basic course failed to meet a primary goal of the basic course as stated by Lewis, that of meeting the most pressing need of all students? Have economic pressures caused a breakdown in the basic course, as predicted by White? If these things have not already occurred, will they happen in the near future?

Some researchers would answer "yes" to that last question despite the endurance and growth of the basic course. While little substantive change has taken place, many suggestions and rationales for change have been espoused. While Hostettler called for change largely because of a perceived shortage of college teachers in the work force, a fear that is not currently an issue, others have called for

change for reasons that still plague us today. Basically, they fall into two categories: intellectual and pragmatic (Mehrlay and Backes 1972).

Intellectually, there have been two reasons given for change. Though public speaking continues to be the emphasis of the basic course, there is reason to believe that incorporating more areas of communication would be valuable. Mehrlay and Backes (1972) state this view:

A young colleague seemed startled when he learned from the Gibsor survey that most beginning college and university courses in speech were still primarily performance. Speculation ensued about what unique concepts were posited in those classes which were not espoused at the local Toastmasters Club. What variations uttered on those treasured shibboleths "More eye-contact," "Try some gestures," "Seemed to lack poise," and/or "Tighten up the organization a little bit." Pick a text, almost any text, and tiptoe through labyrinthian wastelands of platform movement, the vocalized pause, the proper use of note cards, and that hardy triumvirate of rhetorical musketeers: Logos, Pathos, and their trusty companion, Ethos (207).

While those of us who teach public speaking courses and believe in the benefits such courses have to offer may react dubiously to the above statements, Mehrlay and Backes (1972) continue with the more popular extension of this argument:

Surely this insistence upon public speaking does much to perpetuate the image the public holds of the discipline. Rather than an emphasis on communication patterns more relevant to contemporary America, for example dyadic and small group interaction, students are still exposed to content and skills in but one highly specialized mode of communication (207).

Their argument centers on the feeling that if most students are going to have only one exposure to a speech communication course, that course should strive to expose students to at least a few of the skills they will need as communicators in today's world. As stated by Dedmon

(1965), "our traditional approaches have blinded us to the real objective of the required first course: to teach a general education course in oral communication" (125).

The other intellectual reason for change centers around the possible lack of intellectual challenge that any course that predominantly teaches one skill may have. Mehrley and Backes (1972) state that the emphasis on public speaking encourages presentation of a body of knowledge that consists primarily of the "norms" of the field. These norms "minimize description to concentrate on prescription, an approach that stems from a particular value system" (209). This encourages students to apply the norms without consideration for the strategy's potential effectiveness in a specific communication situation. The result? "Too many basic courses in speech are intellectual wastelands" (209).

This argument may not elicit agreement from a majority of professionals involved with the basic course. However, certainly the possibility exists that a "how to" approach often dominates an "analysis" approach in reality even if it is not the approach we advocate in theory. The sheer number of performances currently required in the basic course may pose time pressures that increase the likelihood that "doing" outweighs "analyzing;" the 1979 survey cited earlier revealed that 80% of the basic courses required from four to ten performances per term" (Gibson et al. 1980, 3). Actually, this lack of academic rigor may be a reason presented for why the basic course has not undergone any change.

These arguments, then, call for change for intellectual reasons; they point to a perceived need to broaden the scope of units covered in the basic course to keep it effective and current.

In the area of pragmatism, there are also reasons being advocated for change. One such reason grows out of this feeling that the basic course may not be considered challenging enough. The image of the basic course has significant impact on the image of the discipline in general. "The instructional staff, the department, and the entire discipline are often judged on the basis of this single course. Available data indicates that this judgement is often unfavorable" (Mehrley and Backes 1972, 206).

The next pragmatic issue is that of economics. Currently, the economic pressures are having an effect on the basic course.

Few colleges and universities have eluded edicts from legislators, super-boards, regents, presidents, and/or deans which call for the "streamlining of programs," the "generation of respectable FTE's" or the "temporary injunction against any new programs or courses." Vacancies caused by retirement go unfilled; nontenured staff are not re-appointed by administrative fiat; salary lines are lost if a faculty member resigns. Horror tales abound of graduate programs eliminated, budgets slashed and even departments abolished or absorbed (Mehrely and Backes 1972, 205).

This statement seems just as true today. In short, programs no longer have the luxury of operating independent of financial considerations. "We are required to be more accountable and responsible for getting optimum educational achievement out of the expenditure of educational funds" (Brooks and Leth 1976, 192).

One last aspect of pragmatism has become an issue: efficient use of faculty teaching time. In a time when "publish or perish" rules the philosophy of academia, any measures that can save instruction time while not sacrificing quality are a true blessing to pressured faculty.

Together, these arguments, then call for change for pragmatic reasons; they point to a perceived need to keep our image strong and to become time- and cost-effective in the basic course to keep it effective and current.

The Questions Raised Concerning the Changes Reported

These intellectual and pragmatic reasons presented show that there have been calls for change made in the basic courses. The advocacy of a basic course which incorporates more of the emphases in the broad field of speech communication and which experiments with instructional

formats that are cost- and time-effective has been made over the years. However, the literature reviewed showed little of the changes that could be expected. It seems puzzling to find that "the basic course has changed very little while the discipline as a whole is in the midst of accelerating revision — long held theories and traditional pedagogies are being challenged. The basic course, seemingly quite oblivious of the radical changes in the form and substance of the entire field of speech, continues as it always has" (Mehrely and Backes 1972, 206).

Can this be taken as a sign that the basic course has not changed because it has not needed to change to be effective even in the midst of discipline and societal change? The overwhelming agreement on public speaking as the content to be emphasized and the seldom-changing reliance on a self-contained classroom as the principle teaching method may indicate that the basic course did not need to change in order to be effective. Public speaking may be the kind of skill that remains integral to our discipline and maintains its importance in the lives of students whether it be the 1950s or 1980s or beyond. Likewise, the notion of a self-contained classroom with one instructor and a group of students small enough to give personal attention to may be a teaching method that remains effective for learning even if it is not cost-effective. Surely this method of teaching has dominated all levels of education for decades, while innovative methods like the open classroom have flourished for a period of time and then been discarded in favor of the more traditional setting. It is, therefore, highly possible that change has not crept into the basic course from the 1950s until the present because the basic course of the 1950s was, and has continued to be, an optimally effective course.

However, there is another side to this issue. Perhaps the fact that the basic course has remained relatively static in the midst of unprecedented change means that the course is no longer relevant to the present, yet continues because the discipline itself does not want to tamper with a course so integral to overall departmental health? Maybe universities require public speaking emphases because the people in decision-making positions do not know enough about the

field of speech communication to know what else this field has to offer students?

One more potential answer to this concern for little change presents itself. Perhaps the reason there appears to be little change has more to do with the nature of research and publication than anything else. It would be very easy to admit that the state of the basic course articles described had faults. Although the authors often claim to have a representative sample, they do not allow readers to distinguish what information comes from what source. It would not be surprising to find out, for example, that small schools with only a few sections of the basic course employ small, self-contained sections since no other instructional format would make any sense. Some departments of speech communication have a specific focus (mass communication, broadcasting) and so an emphasis in these departments would be expected to be different than ones sharing broader goals (as departments of speech communication). It also is highly possible that the people conducting the research, sharing the opinions and even answering the surveys are not the people in the position to know/report changes as they take place.

A key question may be whether or not the basic course directors publish their innovations. General conversations at conventions lead to the conclusion that most of them do not. Yet these same conversations lead to the belief that many schools do use TV and other forms of media extensively. New texts cover topics like interviewing and gender communication indicating instructor interest in these materials. So, the literature available may not represent the state of the basic course accurately.

Summary and Conclusion

From the literature reviewed, the history of the basic course shows that it has had a continued emphasis on public speaking and it typically has been taught in self-contained sections with one instructor responsible for teaching 20-25 students. Change in the basic communication course has

been slow to take place. While theoretical rifts abound, major deviations from the predominance of public speaking are found in isolated situations only. However, it seems that the most significant change that has taken place in the basic course is a result of pragmatic issues. Economics, in particular, have encouraged the use of more graduate assistants and have forced departments to look for ways to increase enrollments without sacrificing quality.

The lack of change may be an artifact of the research available. Certainly, after the review of literature was completed, there was a sense of questioning as to just what we know from this review. The research is vague and there are many questions yet unanswered. Are we still meeting the "pressing needs" of students today? Is the dominance of public speaking representative of the most valuable skills our field has to offer students in a basic course? It is hard to say, then, what the cause for the delay in change has been or even if change is truly needed. The lack of change could be a true difference in philosophies (White et al. 1954). It could be real satisfaction with the basic course as it is now taught (Gibson et al. 1980). It could be resistance to change at any level (Oliver 1962). It could be that economic pressures have not had an impact on every institution. It could even be from a lack of innovative ideas. Sadly, it may be from lack of systematic research in this area. With the importance the basic course holds in most speech communication departments, these questions seem worth pursuing.

The 1990s may be a time of great change for society. Space travel once again has grabbed our attention, opening new frontiers of technological advances and communication challenges. Changing relations with foreign countries have brought possible opportunities for advanced interaction among people of differing cultures. These changes continue to point to a need for a philosophical/intellectual approach that stresses the need for a variety of communication skills in order to be effective in personal and career roles. In addition, the economic pressures that have had an impact on education will continue to do so. Every day newspapers are filled with stories concerning defeated millages, program cutbacks, pressure by unions and other teacher interest

groups to increase salaries and put more money toward programs, etc. However, even in the face of monetary cutbacks, educators are expected to produce better results than ever before. The education system is being analyzed critically and being soundly reprimanded for not providing the quality education taxpayers demand for their children. Higher education is not immune to these trends.

This social environment calls for a need for an economic/pragmatic approach that seeks the most cost- and time-effective formats of instruction possible while still maintaining and/or increasing the image of and the overall quality of education in our field. Continued experimentation with new formats of instruction, new units of instruction, etc. should be conducted and, most importantly, published so the field as a whole can benefit from such research. Innovative teaching techniques that meet the increasing communication skills needs of effective society members and that maximize cost and time-effectiveness in an environment where optimal learning takes place may no longer be just topics for discussion at the conventions and in the journals in speech communication; such changes well may be necessary to keep our basic course strong and, because of its strong connection to our field as a whole, signal the health of the entire discipline of speech communication.

References

- Bacon, Wallace A. 1977. "Higher Education and Speech Communication: The Next Decade." *The Southern Speech Communication Journal* 43: 9-15.
- Baird, A. Craig, Mary Louise Gehring, Harry P. Kerr, Haig A. Bosmajian, and Eugene E. White. 1967. "Symposium on Using Speech Models." *The Speech Teacher* 16: 11-27.
- Bartlett, J. 1968. *Familiar Quotations*, 14th ed. E.M. Beck, ed. Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Company.

- Berryman-Fink, Cynthia, and Lucille Pederson. 1981. "Testing the Effects of a Competency-Based Interpersonal Communication Course." *The Southern Speech Communication Journal* 46: 251-262.
- Brooks, William D., and Pamela J. Leth. 1976. "Reducing Instructional Costs: A Survey of the Basic Course in Communication and an Experimental Test of a Proposed Instructional Model." *Communication Education* 25: 191-202.
- Bryant, Donald C. 1971. "Retrospect and Prospect: 1970." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 57: 1-10.
- Buerkel-Rothfuss, Nancy, and Janet Yerby. November 1982. "PSI vs. a More Traditional Model for Teaching the Basic Course." Speech Communication Association Convention. Louisville, KY.
- Dedmon, Donald N. 1965. "The Required First Course In Speech as Oral Communication." *The Central States Speech Journal* 16: 120-125.
- Dedmon, Donald N., and Kenneth D. Frandsen. 1964. "The 'Required' First Course in Speech: A Survey." *The Speech Teacher* 13: 32-37.
- Fuss-Reineck, Marilyn, and William J. Seiler. April 1982. "Developing the Personalized System of Instruction for the Speech Communication Classroom." Central States Speech Association. Milwaukee, WI.
- Gibson, James W., Charles R. Gruner, William D. Brooks, and Charles R. Petrie, Jr. 1970. "The First Course in Speech: A Survey of U.S. Colleges and Universities." *The Speech Teacher* 19: 13-20.
- Gibson, James W., Charles R. Gruner, Michael S. Hanna, Mary-Jeanette Smythe, and Michael T. Hayes. 1980. "The Basic Course in Speech at U.S. Colleges and Universities." *Communication Education* 29: 1-9.

- Gibson, James W., Michael S. Hanna, and Bill M. Huddleston. 1985. "The Basic Speech Course at U.S. Colleges and Universities: IV." *Communication Education* 34: 281-291.
- Gibson, James W., John A. Kline, and Charles R. Gruner. 1974. "A Re-Examination of the First Course in Speech at U.S. Colleges and Universities." *The Speech Teacher* 23: 206-214.
- Gray, Pamela, L. 1984. "A Comparative Study of Two Formats of the Basic Course in Speech Communication: PSI-Based and Lecture-Recitation." Diss. The Pennsylvania State U.
- Gray, Pamela L., Nancy L. Buerkel-Rothfuss, and Richard W. Thomas. November 1988. "A Comparison Between PSI-Based and Self-Contained Formats of Instruction in the Introductory Speech Communication Course." Speech Communication Association Convention. New Orleans, LA.
- Gray, Pamela L., Nancy L. Buerkel-Rothfuss, and Janet Yerby. 1986. "A Comparison Between PSI-Based and Lecture-Recitation Formats of Instruction in the Introductory Speech Communication Course." *Communication Education* 35: 111-125.
- Hanisko, Sandra, Melissa Beall, Diana Prentice, and William Seiler. April 1982. "Competency-Based Peer Evaluation in the Speech Communication Classroom: An Experimental Training Program." Central States Speech Association Convention. Milwaukee, WI.
- Hanna, Michael S., James W. Gibson. 1983. "Programmed Instruction in Communication Education: An Idea Behind Its Time." *Communication Education* 32: 1-7.
- Hargis, Donald E. 1956. "The First Course in Speech." *The Speech Teacher* 5: 26-33.
- Hostettler, Gordon. 1958. "Rising College Enrollments and Teaching Methods: A Survey." *The Speech Teacher* 7: 99-103.

- Jeffrey, Robert C. 1964. "A History of the Speech Association of America, 1914-1964." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 50: 432-444.
- Keller, Fred S. 1974. "Ten Years of Personalized Instruction." *Teaching of Psychology* 1: 4-9.
- Keller, Fred S., and J. Gilmour Sherman, eds. 1974. *The Keller Plan Handbook*. Menlo Park, CA: W.A. Benjamin, Inc.
- . 1982. *The PSI Handbook: Essays on Personalized Instruction*. Menlo Park, CA: W. A. Benjamin, Inc.
- London, Norman T. 1964. "Professional Attitudes Toward a First Course in Speech and Its Requirement in American Colleges." *The Speech Teacher* 13: 25-31.
- McGrath, Earl J. 1953. "The Coming Breakdown of American Education." *Parents' Magazine* 28: 27, 88-89.
- Mehrley, R. Samuel, and James G. Backes. 1972. "The First Course in Speech: A Call for Revolution." *The Speech Teacher* 21: 205-211.
- Oliver, Robert T. 1962. "One Hundred Years of Teaching Speech: An Interpretation." *The Speech Teacher* 11: 247-252.
- Scott, Michael D., and Thomas J. Young. 1976. "Personalizing Communication Instruction." *Communication Education* 25: 211-221.
- Seiler, William J. 1983. "PSI: An Attractive Alternative for the Basic Speech Communication Course." *Communication Education* 32: 15-25.
- . April 1982. "A Rationale for Using the Personalized System of Instruction (PSI) in the Speech Communication Classroom." Central States Speech Association Convention. Milwaukee, WI.
- Seiler, William J., and Marilyn Fuss-Reineck. 1986. "Developing the Personalized System of Instruction for the Basic Speech Communication Course." *Communication Education* 35: 126-133.

- Staton-Spicer, Ann Q., and Ronald E. Bassett. 1980. "A Mastery Approach to Competency-Based Education for Public Speaking Instruction." *Communication Education* 29: 171-182.
- Taylor, Anita. April 1986. "A Modified Approach to PSI (Personalized System of Instruction) in COMM 100 Introduction to Communication." Eastern Speech Association Convention. Atlantic City, NJ.
- White, Eugene E. 1953. "Assembly Line Techniques: Teaching the Large Class in Speech Fundamentals." *The Speech Teacher* 11: 247-256.
- White, Eugene E., Wayne C. Minnick, C. Raymond Van Dusen, and Thomas R. Lewis. 1954. "Three Interpretations of the First Course in Speech: A Symposium." *The Southern Speech Journal* 20: 163-170.

Notes

¹The term communication generally is used with regard to the discipline of speech communication while the word communications often is used with regard to message technology. However, even though the term as it is used here refers to the discipline, communications is used in this paper since Lewis used this term originally in his article.

What We Know About the Basic Course: What Has the Research Told Us?

*William J. Seiler
Drew McGukin*

The teaching of the basic course, a long and honorable tradition within the speech communication discipline, has been the mainstay of our discipline. The beginning of the basic course has its roots in rhetorical tradition and primarily in training of public speaking. King notes that "the course in public speaking is historically of the prime reasons for the birth and development of departments (of speech communication) and continues to be one of our most important offerings" (143). The Gibson, Gruner, Brooks, and Petrie 1970 survey of the basic communication course concludes that regardless of the title or stated emphasis, the content centers around public speaking, and the Gibson, Gruner, Hanna, Smythe, and Hayes 1980 survey found that over 51 percent of the responding institutions have a public speaking emphasis and at least 40 percent of the remaining 49 percent have a combination course which includes some public speaking. The Gibson, Hanna, and Huddleston 1985 survey indicates a slight increase in the public speaking emphasis to 54 percent. During the same period the Gibson, et al. survey found that the hybrid or fundamentals course fell from 40 percent of the total in 1980 to 34 percent in 1985.

Seiler, Foster, and Pearson in their 1985 survey went beyond the Gibson, et al. studies and surveyed not only the basic course but all other large enrollment courses taught by Departments of Speech. Seiler, et al. found that only 26 percent of those surveyed labeled their basic course exclusively a public speaking course, 55 percent a

fundamentals course, and 19 percent both a public speaking and fundamentals course. Although there are sampling problems with both studies because of low returns, the Seiler, et al. study may be less valid because they received approximately 9 percent fewer returns than did Gibson, et al.

The problem with most of the information that has been collected by recent surveys has been in the definition — that is how the basic course is defined. During a recent conference sponsored by the Midwest Directors of the Basic Course there were approximately 45 directors from a variety of universities and colleges in which the issue of what is the basic course was discussed. No agreement could be reached as to what the basic course is or what course best represents it. It seems that before a survey or any research regarding the basic course can be done there needs to be a common operational definition of it. It is often described as the largest beginning (first) speech course. Although it is not the purpose of this paper to discuss definition as to what the basic course is or isn't — it is, however, important to realize that what we do know about the basic course is really not very meaningful because few can agree as to what it is. It seems that the basic communication course is a course, any course, in which the fundamentals of speech are taught. It is a course in which skills in communicating are the primary objective.

The purpose of this essay is to review the literature related to the basic course to determine what we know about it. To accomplish this purpose we (1) identify the base of knowledge upon which the basic course is organized; (2) examine what this base of knowledge tells us about designing and organizing the course; and (3) identify future research areas which should provide direction for the study of the effectiveness of the basic course.

The Base of Knowledge About the Basic Speech Communication Course

Since the basic speech communication course continues to be a vital aspect of any speech communication curriculum

one might assume that its organization is based on a coherent theory and an extensive body of empirical research. There is, however, no support in the existing literature for such an assumption. Contemporary approaches to the organization of the basic course (i.e., public speaking) have grown primarily out of a confluence of a rich and varied rhetorical tradition, the accumulated experiences of teachers and a limited corpus of empirical research.

The Rhetorical Tradition represents a consistent thread of emphasis in the study, teaching, and practice of the basic course. Since classical times, rhetoric has been viewed as either synonymous with public speaking or closely related to it. Any attempt to summarize the vastness of the rhetorical tradition is sketchy at best, but a brief overview illustrates the role it has played in shaping the organization of and teaching in the contemporary speech communication class.

Experience, recognized as an essential aspect of effective instruction, has also influenced the organization of the basic course. Jeffrey and Peterson note that "the best teachers undoubtedly are those who rely upon their inspiration, experience, and imagination for assignments particularly well suited to the group of students they are teaching" (1-2). Teachers can rely both on their own experience and on the shared experience of others.

Research. While most of what we know about the basic course is based on tradition and experience, some research derived knowledge is available to the director of the basic course. Empirical research has been emphasized since the early days of the Association of Academic Teachers of Public Speaking. Winans and the Research Council in 1915 proclaimed the merits of teaching and practice founded on an elaborated research bases. This emphasis has continued to some measure in the present.

Hayworth in 1939 through 1942 reports the results of a massive study of five institutions and as many as 55 people on the effectiveness of public speaking instruction. This research measured 52 different aspects of public speaking including components of student delivery, time spent on different class activities, student impressions of their speech performances, and student background characteristics.

Using these measures, a number of different aspects of course organization were investigated such as the length of the term, morning and afternoon classes, direct and indirect methods of teaching, and the use of memorized and extemporaneous speeches.

Thompson in 1967 summarized quantitative research in speech communication and included a list of generalizations concerning the teaching of public speaking derived from research including the role of rewards, the presentation of information, and the use of direct instruction. Other researchers have examined aspects of public speaking courses such as the impact of different instructional strategies and the use of video-tape in the public speaking classroom. Little research, however, has examined the effectiveness of instruction and practice in developing students' competence (Trank & Steele).

Although tradition, experience, and research have provided teachers with the knowledge used to organize and teach the basic course, we still do not know very much empirically of what works and what does not in teaching students in the basic course.

Theory and Performance

The ratio of theory to performance is the first question usually addressed by those organizing the basic course. In actual practice, the organization of the basic course appears to be weighted toward performance over theory. The latest Gibson et al. 1985 survey indicates the following theory/performance ratios: approximately 14 percent of those surveyed indicate a 20/80 split, 26 percent indicated a 30/70 split, 25 percent a 50/50 split, and 15 percent a 60/40 split between theory and performance. It is interesting to note that in 1980 the ratio of 50/50 or higher toward theory was only 23 percent while in 1985 this type of split accounts for 34 percent of those surveyed. Thus, while there is a thrust toward skills and performance more theory is being taught in the basic course. This difference or trend could be accounted for in the way Gibson, et al. define theory —

"teacher method (lecture/discussion, exams and their discussion, or film)" and performance as "students overtly involved in giving speeches, debating, involved in dialogue, etc." (284).

Empirical support for the division of the basic course into theory and practice components can be found in our literature. Faules, Littlejohn, and Ayres in a test of three different approaches to the course found that students in a performance-oriented course had a significantly higher rate of improvement in their speaking skills than did students who only received theory. In fact, the students in the theory-taught courses were not significantly different in effective speaking skills from students who had received no instruction in communication.

Although a combination of theory and performance is favored, practiced and supported by research, we have no basis in our research literature on what is the most effective ratio of theory to performance. Thus, the decision is left to each individual teacher or director as to what they believe is best for students.

Number, Length, Nature, and Order of Performances

In 1980 Gibson, et al. reported that 68% of the schools reporting had between 4 and 6 performance and 23% between 7 and 10 performances. The 1985 survey's results indicates 70% of those responding had between 1 and 5 performances; 16% reported 7 to 10 performances; 4% reported more than 10 performances. While the data support teaching public speaking — it also tends to show a decline in the number of performances per course.

There is only one study which had been done to examine the number and length of speaking performances. Gardner in his study divided 36 minutes of speaking time into four different conditions — one group gave 12 three minute speeches; a second group gave 6 six minute speeches; a third group gave 2 speeches of 3 minutes, 2 of 6 minutes and 2 of 9 minutes in length; and a fourth group gave 4 speeches of 9

minutes each. All groups did show significant speaking improvement from the pretest to the posttest. There was, however, no significant difference between groups. Thus, the number and length of speeches appear to produce no statistical difference in students' speaking skills development. It was found, however, that students were more satisfied with fewer speaking assignments even though the time limits may have been increased.

The type of speech presentation, i.e., impromptu, extemporaneous or manuscript as well as the general purpose to inform, entertain, or persuade had not been researched. Thus, it is not known which type or purpose provides the most benefit to the students. Further topic selection techniques and strategies to provide students with speaking assignments are plentiful but none have been researched to indicate which may or may not be the best.

Existing literature does not provide us with sufficient information to provide guidelines to the teacher or director of the basic course as to the number and length of student performance assignments. Most of the information related to assignments and assignment length can be found in instructor's manuals — these, however, are not consistent nor is there any empirical support for any particular approach.

Optimally Effective Performances

Another question concerning performance in the basic course is: How can performance be made optimally effective for the student? A traditional response is for students to practice and that practice makes perfect. Although practice can help students develop their skills, practice without some form of feedback may do little more than reinforce ineffective behaviors.

Providing students with evaluation and critiques of their performances has consistently been a part of basic course instruction. The problem that confronts basic course instructors is which type of critique is best, what specific comments should be given on the critique, and how should

the critique be presented? There has been some significant work done by Sprague and Young on the type of critique statements an instructor makes but there still is little known about which specific critique comments help students the most to improve their speaking abilities.

Technological advances in audio-visual equipment especially the video camera and recorder (camcorder) have potential for aiding students in improving their communication skills. Research using video recording has indicated that video-taping students' speeches improved student satisfaction with the basic course (Bradely); combining video-tape playback with a teacher critique can improve speaking effectiveness (Diehl, Breen, & Larson; McCroskey & Lashbrook); allowing students to video-tape performances until they are satisfied and then presenting the tape for criticism rather than live presentations produced significant differences in student attendance, attitude, and evaluation of the instructor (Goldhaber and Kline); and allowing the presence of the video-tape recorder during student performance did not affect student anxiety, exhibitionism, or reticence (Bush, Bittner, and Brooks).

Methods of Instruction

A central concern of the instructor or course director is the method of instruction for the course. Methods used in the basic course include the traditional lecture and discussion as well as alternative methods such as exercises (Jones; Weaver), Personalized System of Instruction — PSI (Seiler; Seiler and Fuss-Reineck; Heun, Heun, and Ratcliff; Scott and Young; Gray, Buerkel-Rothfuss, and Yerby) and other mastery approaches (Stanton-Spicer and Bassett), programmed instruction (Amato; Hanna), and learning contracts (King; Stelzner; Stern). Such approaches are derived from learning theory and instructional design as well as practical experience in the classroom.

Amato, in comparing programmed instruction with video-taped lectures, found the programmed instruction methods to be more effective for teaching public speaking.

Cheatham and Jordan compared three approaches (1) a mass lecture by a faculty member with graduate assistants leading discussion sessions in which students gave speeches, (2) a team approach with a faculty member who presented the lectures and lead one discussion session for half of the class and a graduate assistant who lead the other discussion session, and (3) a traditional approach in which a faculty member lectured and evaluated student speeches. There was no significant differences in the overall achievement among the three approaches, but the students in the traditional approach had a higher average score on the midterm examination and they were rated higher on their final speech than students in the team approach.

Seiler in comparing traditional and Personalized System of Instruction (PSI) taught sections of the basic course in terms of cost effectiveness and student satisfaction, found the PSI sections to be significantly less costly and higher in student satisfaction. In an other study Gray, Buerkel-Rothfuss and Yerby comparing PSI to traditional taught sections in four areas (1) attitudes toward and satisfaction with the course, (2) academic achievement in the course, (3) communication apprehension, and (4) growth in communication skills. The findings suggest that the PSI approach tends to equal, or, most often, be more effective than the traditional approach in all four areas.

Conclusion and Proposal for Future Research

Our examination of basic course literature reveals that instructors and directors do not have sufficient empirical support on which to design the course. The basic course is organized similar to the way it was organized when the speech was established as an academic discipline, that is, it is organized and disigned for the most part on tradition and experience rather than theory or research. The net result is that we do not know what is the most effective approach to organizing and teaching the basic course.

A Proposal For the Future

Our purpose is not to debunk tradition and experience or to advocate that a theory based on empirical research will lead to a different organization in the basic course. Instead, we discovered that most of what we do in the basic course is the result of habit or tradition: "we have always done it that way."

The goal of teachers and directors of the basic course should not be merely to perpetuate tradition and build experience. Rather, our goal should be to teach speech in a way which is effective and which can ensure that our students learn the principles and concepts of speech communication — theory and practice. At the present time we have little assurance that we are accomplishing this goal effectively or efficiently.

Our proposal for the future is that we develop an on-going systematic program of research in which scholars investigate the effectiveness of the basic course. There are many questions yet unanswered and thus the best starting point is to begin with what we know from the previous research and build upon it. The research questions should reflect an interest in what makes the basic course successful and academically sound. We know that the previous research has suffered from methodological problems which restrict their utility. We now possess more sophisticated research designs and statistical procedures thus allowing for replication and new innovative research into the basic course.

Unfortunately, calls for future research such as ours are customary and a relatively easy way to conclude a paper. We feel, however, that the research we call for is desperately needed to face the questions of accountability, to justify what we do and why we do it, and to help us determine what is the best way or ways to teach the basic course.

References

- Amato, P.P. 1964. "A Comparative Study of Programmed Instruction and Videotaped Lectures as Part of a Course in Public Speaking." *Speech Monographs* 31: 461-466.
- Bohlken, R. 1971. "A Petition for Prescribed Speech Subjects in Public Speaking Class." *Speech Teacher* 20: 215-216.
- Bradley, B.E. 1970. "An Experimental Study of the Effectiveness of the Videorecorder in Teaching a Basic Speech Course." *Speech Teacher* 19: 161-167.
- Brandes, P.D. 1967. "The Common Materials Approach to the Teaching of Speech." *Speech Teacher* 16: 265-268.
- Broadrick, K., and T. Clevenger. 1965. "Rotational Instruction in the Public Speaking Course." *Speech Teacher* 14: 200-206.
- Buerkel-Rothuss, N. and J. Yerby. November 1982. "PSI vs. Traditional Model of Teaching the Basic Course." Speech Communication Association Convention, Louisville, KY.
- Bush, J.D., J.R. Bittner, and W.D. Brooks. 1972. "The Effect of the Video-Tape Recorder on Levels of Anxiety, Exhibitionism, and Reticence." *Speech Teacher* 21: 127-130.
- Chapel, R. 1972. "Speech Students as College Recruiters." *Speech Teacher* 21: 141-143.
- Cheatham, R. and W. Jordan. 1972. "An Investigation of Graduate Assistants in Teaching the College Public Speaking Course." *Speech Teacher* 21: 107-114.
- Diehl, E.R., M.P. Breen, and C.U. Larson. 1970. "The Effects of Teacher Comment and Television Video Tape Playback on the Frequency of Nonfluency in Beginning Speech Students." *Speech Teacher* 19: 185-190.
- Ehninger, D. 1968. "On Systems of Rhetoric." *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 1: 131-144.

- Faules, D.F., S. Littlejohn, and J. Ayres. 1972. "An Experimental Study of the Comparative Effects of Three Instructional Methods on Speaking Effectiveness." *Speech Teacher* 21: 46-52.
- Fetzer, R.C. 1977. "An Alternative Approach for Teaching Public Speaking." *Communication Education* 26: 261-270.
- Fisher, W. R. 1970. "Philosophic Perspective and Beginning Public Speaking Texts." *Speech Teacher* 19: 206-210.
- Gardner, W. 1952. *The Relationship of Improvement in Public Speaking Skill to the Length and Frequency of Classroom Performance*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Northwestern University.
- Gibson, J.W., C.R. Gruner, W.D. Brooks, and C.R. Petrie. 1970. "The First Course in Speech: A Survey of U.S. Colleges and Universities." *Speech Teacher* 19: 13-20.
- , C.R. Gruner, M.S. Hanna, M. Smythe, and M.T. Hayes. 1980. "The Basic Course in Speech at U.S. Colleges and Universities: III." *Communication Education* 29: 109.
- , M.S. Hanna, and B.M. Huddleston. 1985. "The Basic Speech Course at U.S. Colleges and Universities: IV." *Communication Education* 34: 281-291.
- Goldhaber, G.M. and J.A. Kline. 1972. "Effects of Videotape on Attendance and Attitude in the Fundamentals of Speech Communication Course." *Speech Teacher* 21: 93-98.
- Gray, P.L., N.L. Buerkel-Rothfuss, and J. Yerby. 1986. "A Comparison Between PSI-Based and Lecture-Recitation Formats of Instruction in the Introductory Speech Communication Course." *Communication Education* 35: 111-125.
- Gross, L.S. 1970. "Creative Speaking From a 'Bag of Tricks.'" *Speech Teacher* 19: 76-77.

- Hanna, M.S. 1974. "Programed Instruction of Organization of Ideas in the Basic Speech Communication Course." *Today's Speech* 22: 5-10.
- Hansen, S.P. 1982. "Small is Beautiful in the Speech Classroom." *Communication Education* 31: 67-71.
- Hayworth, D. 1939. "A Search for Facts on the Teaching of Public Speaking: I." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 25: 377-385.
- . 1940. "A Search for Facts on the Teaching of Public Speaking: II." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 26: 31-38.
- . 1941. "A Search for Facts on the Teaching of Public Speaking: III." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 27: 31-38.
- . 1942. "A Search for Facts on the Teaching of Public Speaking: IV." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 28: 347-354.
- Heun, L.R., R.E. Heun, and L.L. Ratcliff. 1976. "Individualizing Speech Communication Instruction." *Communication Education* 25: 185-190.
- Hildebrandt, H.W. 1967. "A Rationale for Non-Fragmented Topics." *Speech Teacher* 16: 259-264.
- Hollister, R.D.T. 1917. "The Beginning Course in Oratory at the University of Michigan." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 3: 172-173.
- Houghton, G.H. 1918. "A Beginning Course in Public Speaking for Colleges and Universities." *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 4: 150-159.
- Jeffrey, R.C. and O. Peterson. 1977. *Instructor's Manual to Accompany Speech Communication: A Basic Text*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Jones, J.A. 1981. "Preparing Contingency Plans for Public Speaking Situations." *Communication Education* 30: 423-425.
- Kay, W.J. 1917. "Course I in Public Speaking at Washington and Jefferson College." *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 3: 252-248.

- King, T.R. 1969. "An Inductive Opening Exercise." *Speech Teacher* 18: 21-22.
- McCroskey, J.C. and W. Lashbrook. 1970. "The Effect on Various Methods of Videotape Television Playback in a Course in Public Speaking." *Speech Teacher* 19: 199-205.
- McNally, J.R. 1969. "Hermogenes in the Modern Classroom." *Speech Teacher* 18: 18-20.
- Mehrely, R.S. and J.G. Backes. 1972. "The First Course in Speech: A Call for Revolution." *Speech Teacher* 21: 205-211.
- Miles, P.L. 1977. "A Practical Final for Speech Fundamentals." *Communication Education* 26: 164-166.
- Patterson, J.W. 1969. "The Activities Approach in the First Course." *Speech Teacher* 18: 223-229.
- Pearson, J.C., P.E. Nelson, and R.L. Sorenson. 1981. "How Students and Alumni Perceive the Basic Course." *Communication Education* 30: 296-299.
- Rarig, F.M. and H.S. Greaves. 1954. "National Speech Organization and Speech Education." In K.R. Wallace (ed.), *History of Speech Education in America: Background Studies*. New York, NY: Appleton-Century-Crofts.
- Research Council. 1915. "Research in Public Speaking." *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 1: 24-32.
- Rodman, G. 1977. "The Undergraduate as a Communication Analyst." *Communication Education* 26: 75-77.
- Rossiter, C.M. 1973. "Helping Students Choose Classroom Speech Topics More Realistically." *Speech Teacher* 22: 159-160.
- Scott, M.D. and T.J. Young. 1976. "Personalizing Communication Instruction." *Communication Education* 25: 211-221.
- Scott, R.L. 1975. "A Synoptic View of Systems of Western Rhetoric." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 61: 439-447.

- Seiler, W.J. 1983. "PSI: An Attractive Alternative for the Basic Speech Communication Course." *Communication Education* 32: 15-28.
- Seiler, W.J., T. Foster, and J.C. Pearson. 1985. "Beyond the Basic Course: A National Survey." Speech Communication Association Convention. Denver, CO.
- Seiler, W.J. and M. Fuss-Reineck. 1986. "Developing the Personalized System of Instruction for the Basic Speech Communication Course." *Communication Education* 35: 126-133.
- Sprague, J. 1971. *An Investigation of the Written Critique Behavior of College Communication Instructors*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Purdue University.
- Stanton-Spicer, A.Q. and R.E. Bassett. 1980. "A Mastery Learning Approach to Competency-Based Education for Public Speaking Instruction." *Communication Education* 29: 171-182.
- Stelzner, S.L. 1975. "A Case for Contract Grading." *Speech Teacher* 24: 127-132.
- Stern, D.A. 1972. "A Flow Chart Approach to Public Speaking on the Contract Plan." *Today's Speech* 20: 25-26.
- Thompson, W.N. 1967. *Quantitative Research in Public Address and Communication*. New York, NY: Random.
- Trank, D.M. and J.M. Steele. 1983. "Measurable Effects of a Communication Skills Course: An Initial Study." *Communication Education* 32: 227-236.
- Trueblood, T.C. 1915. "College Courses in Public Speaking." *Quarterly Journal of Public Speaking* 1:260-265.
- Weaver, R.L. 1970. "Introductory Group Exercises for Public Speaking." *Speech Teacher* 19: 234-236.
- Winans, J.A. 1915. "The Need for Research." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 1: 17-23.
- . 1917. "Public Speaking at Cornell University." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 3: 153-162.

- Young, S.L. 1974. "Student Perceptions of Helpfulness in Classroom Speech Criticism." *Communication Education* 23: 222-234.

A Comparison Between PSI-Based and Self-Contained Formats of Instruction in the Introductory Speech Communication Course

*Pamela L. Gray
Nancy L. Buerkel-Rothfuss
Richard W. Thomas*

"The basic course in speech remains a vital component of American higher education in the mid 1980's, reflecting a societal trend to prepare students for skilled oral presentation of ideas in a competitive society." This last sentence in the fourth and newest SCA-sponsored nationwide investigation of the basic course (Gibson, Hanna, and Huddleston 1985, 290) reaffirms the importance of communication training for college students. In addition to highlighting the value of the basic course for students, the authors go on to stress the value of the basic course to the discipline. "Respondents to this survey indicated that the basic course plays a significant role in their student credit hour generation" (283). Such statements remind us that high priority must be given to keeping this course a quality course. However, keeping the basic course a quality one can be a difficult task.

The multiple-section basic course in speech communication is caught in a number of contradictions. First, most large basic courses must be both a service course to the university as a whole (which generally involves meeting expectations set by people outside of the discipline) and an introduction to the field of speech communication

(which involves providing content that is necessary for upper-division courses in the field). The dual purpose makes satisfying the needs of this diverse population challenging. Second, more and more basic courses are being held accountable in their certification of competency, which is an expensive and intricate process. At the same time, financial pressures, increasing enrollments in major/minor courses, and the availability of less expensive staffing alternatives discourage departments from devoting financial resources and senior faculty to instruction in the basic course. The Gibson et al. study states that the basic course is taught mostly by junior faculty (graduate teaching assistants, instructors, and assistant professors) and that the quality of instruction is a major concern. A final contradiction pertains to class size, which was cited as another major concern in the Gibson et al. article, leading the investigators to state "that 'small class size' in the basic course appears to be crucial to the individuality of instruction and its interactive nature" (282). The ideal model calls for small sections of the basic course to allow for maximal student interaction, but the financial benefits gained from high student-instructor ratios call for maximizing class size. The results of the Gibson et al. survey seem clear: the discipline needs quality instruction that meets the societal demand for enhanced communication skills and that instruction should take place in a setting conducive to individuality and interaction. The financial implications are also clear: departments must maximize learning while minimizing costs.

Many professionals in our field would argue that we already have effective basic courses. According to Gibson et al., most class sizes range from 18-30 students, and 75% of the respondents in their sample were generally satisfied with the basic course. Yet the debates rage on, especially where large, multiple-section basic courses are concerned: Can junior faculty and, more questionably, GTAs provide effective instruction in the basic course? What instructional format(s) should we follow? What is the maximum class size we should use? While agreeing that quality should not be sacrificed and that interaction is essential to this quality, it is hard to deny the fact that small class sizes are very costly. Likewise, the

use of junior faculty, temporary instructors, and GTAs in both Ph.D. and M.A. programs provides the least expensive form of staffing; if quality and interaction are not sacrificed, the use of such instructors in multiple-section basic courses seems essential to the overall health of departments and colleges. While the goals of quality instruction, increased interaction, and cost-effectiveness may be clear, instructional methods that would allow all three to be achieved may be more elusive.

In the past ten years, an innovative teaching technique has been applied to basic courses in a variety of disciplines with considerable success: the Personalized System of Instruction (PSI). (For a detailed description of the PSI model and documentation of its effectiveness as an instructional technique, see Keller 1974; Keller and Sherman 1974, 1982; Sherman 1974; Sherman, Ruskin, and Lazar 1978; and Sherman, Ruskin, and Semb 1982.) Developed by Keller, the system has five defining characteristics which differentiate it from other teaching/learning models: 1) mastery learning, 2) self-pacing, 3) a stress on the written word, 4) the use of student proctors, and 5) the use of lectures to motivate rather than to supply essential information (Keller and Sherman 1982, 22).

Some disciplines rely heavily on PSI as a preferred method of instruction in introductory courses, including psychology, physics, mathematics, and chemistry (Boylan 1980). The PSI has not been used extensively in the speech communication field, however, Boylan's 1980 study did not list speech communication as a discipline that frequently used PSI as an instructional model. Although the Gibson et al. survey does not offer specific information concerning the use of PSI, it does report that only 15% of the schools in the sample responded that they used the traditional mass lecture/small performance system while 85% "did not" (Gibson et al. 284). While this finding may leave one to speculate about the possible use of PSI by those departments that did not report using the more traditional model, lack of reported research suggests that basic speech communication courses have not incorporated PSI in any significant way.

Despite this seeming lack of widespread acceptance, some schools have begun experimentation with a modified PSI approach (e.g., Buerkel-Rothfuss and Yerby 1982; Gray, Buerkel-Rothfuss and Yerby 1986; Seiler 1982, 1983; Seiler and Fuss-Reineck 1986; Taylor 1986). Much evidence exists to support the idea that a modified PSI approach may help speech communication courses keep the quality and even increase the interaction with/among students while becoming cost-effective (e.g., Gray 1984; Hursh 1976; Kulik, Kulik, and Cohen 1979; Seiler 1982, 1983; Sherman, Ruskin, and Semb 1982; Taveggia 1976). Ongoing research conducted by Gray et al. (1986) has shown a modified PSI approach to instruction in the basic speech communication course to be a very effective learning format. (For more information concerning some of the applications of PSI in communication courses, see Berryman-Fink and Pederson 1981; Fuss-Reineck and Seiler 1982; Hanisko, Beall, Prentice, and Seiler 1982; Hanna and Gibson 1983; Heun, Heun, and Ratcliff 1976; Scott and Young 1976; Staton-Spicer and Bassett 1980; and Taylor 1986.) In a comparison of two instructional models, lecture-recitation and PSI-based, the PSI-based system was equal to or more effective than the lecture-recitation in four areas. Specifically,

- 1) PSI-based students and instructors felt more satisfied with the overall quality of the course;
- 2) PSI-based students achieved the same or better grades on their final speeches, final examinations, and course grades;
- 3) PSI-based students reported feeling less anxious in communication situations after taking the course than did their counterparts; and
- 4) PSI-based students reported the same or more overall growth in a variety of communication skills (Gray et al. 1986, 124).

These data, arrived at through two studies spaced a semester apart, provide evidence that a PSI-based approach could be very useful for speech communication. In particular, PSI-based formats for instruction appear to offer advantages in each of the three areas discussed earlier: quality, cost-effectiveness, and interaction. The quality of the instruction was evidenced by the often superior grades,

heightened satisfaction with the course, and overall increase in perceived skill improvement. The cost effectiveness of the PSI-based system was irrefutable: PSI-based sections averaged 70 students per section versus an average of 23 students per lab/recitation section. The interaction component, while seemingly contradicted by the large class size, also improved in the PSI-based sections, due mostly to the use of small subgroups facilitated by undergraduate teaching assistants (UTAs). Previous research has shown that the use of UTAs gives students personal contact superior to other models and increases the individual interaction and overall participation of each student (Gray et al. 1986; Seiler 1983).

Of course, the PSI-based model also has its drawbacks. Such tasks as the enormous amount of pre-planning, tracking the progress of so many students, and providing sufficient time for repeating assignments require high levels of organizational and managerial skills. In addition, overseeing, assisting, and in many ways training the UTAs requires strong pedagogical, supervisory, facilitation, and interpersonal skills (e.g., Gallup cited in Sherman 1974; Johnson cited in Sherman et al. 1982; Keller and Sherman 1982, 42-45; Smith and Weitzer cited in Sherman et al. 1978, 77-87). Obviously, dealing with a classroom of 70 students greatly complicates classroom dynamics. Together, these demands tend to make the PSI-based approach to teaching more difficult for first-semester, inexperienced GTAs and, perhaps, even junior faculty, than the more traditional lecture-recitation format. This difficulty is heightened when the GTAs and/or junior faculty are completely responsible for the instruction and evaluation in a course section. Indeed, the six years of experimentation with a PSI-based model by these researchers have proved this claim to be accurate in our experience. In addition, there is the problem of recruiting a sufficient number of motivated, reliable UTAs. Using the typical ratio of one UTA for each group of ten students (Keller and Sherman 1982, 19), 40 UTAs would be needed in a course that enrolls 400 students. In a course where UTAs have substantial responsibilities (e.g., processing exercises, evaluating assignments, coaching presentations,

facilitating group discussions, etc.), Smith and Weitzer (cited in Sherman et al. 1978, 84) encourage that the ratio be no higher than one UTA to every five to seven students. In a basic course that utilizes UTAs in positions of responsibility, the course that enrolls 400 students could require as many as 80 qualified UTAs. In situations where the basic course enrolls 1000 or more students per semester, sufficient numbers of qualified UTAs simply may not exist. Even if a large number of qualified UTAs could be found, the problem of training and compensating these UTAs in some way for their contribution remains. Course credit can be given to the UTAs instead of money (Keller and Sherman 1982, 34-35), but the need for faculty to train the UTAs can still place substantial time and financial demands on a department.

A solution to the dilemma created by the obvious pedagogical advantages of PSI and the difficulties involved in implementing the PSI model in larger basic courses is to incorporate as many of the desirable features of PSI as possible while minimizing the disadvantages. Such an attempt forms the basis for this research.

The Self-Contained Model: A Contrast With the PSI-Based Model

This study represents a second step in an ongoing process of attempting to identify the "ideal" model for teaching the basic hybrid course in speech communication. The course examined for this research is a highly standardized, multiple-section course designed to meet specific competency-based behavioral objectives which are made known to the students through a standardized syllabus given during the first week of the course. In the previously-cited research (Gray et al. 1986), two instructional models were compared: lecture-recitation and PSI-based. The PSI-based model seemed clearly superior yet not feasible to use in the multiple-section basic course involved for two major reasons: the course regularly enrolls between 1000 and 1300 students per semester which would require recruiting and training 100 to 260 qualified UTAs (one UTA per every

five to ten students), and the heavy reliance on inexperienced GTAs makes the total implementation of a PSI-based model a risky undertaking. Therefore, a third model was developed. Labelled the "self-contained" model, this third alternative retained as many of the PSI-based characteristics as possible while minimizing the managerial skills needed by the GTAs and the number of UTAs required.

The self-contained format examined in this study incorporated a significant number of the characteristics utilized in the PSI-based format: 1) mastery learning was incorporated by allowing students to repeat some written assignments and all unit tests until competency was achieved; 2) self-pacing was used by allowing students to complete the unit tests in advance; 3) a stress on the written word was provided through the textbook, handbook, and study guide materials (created especially for this course) which were the only bases for the tests; and 4) lectures were used to motivate rather than to supply essential information. There were only three differences between the self-contained format and the PSI-based format: the use of student proctors (UTAs) which is one of the five "defining characteristics of PSI," the size of the class, and the ability of the PSI-based students to repeat their first two speeches until a minimum competency level was achieved.

The self-contained sections were taught by GTAs, met for approximately three hours per week, and had an average class size of 33. The GTAs complete an intensive training course which meets for two weeks prior to the beginning of classes and continues to meet throughout the semester; this training helps to maintain a standardization of course content across sections. The PSI-based sections were taught by regular faculty who routinely teach sections of the basic course, met for approximately three hours per week, and had an average class size of 68. PSI-based sections were subdivided into smaller groups of six or seven members, as encouraged by Smith and Weitzer (in Sherman et al. 1978, 84) when students are assigned to UTAs who take on significant responsibilities in the course. Each of these small groups was led by a UTA who served as a facilitator for the group, leading exercises, answering questions, and providing

tutoring in areas of weakness. UTAs also helped with some record-keeping, occasionally led class activities, and evaluated the ungraded speech assignments. UTAs received training for their role through a course taken concurrently with this UTA assignment. UTAs were not used in the self-contained sections.

Students were arbitrarily assigned to sections spread throughout the day without regard for the instructional format. Students were assigned to sections via a computer program based on times available in their schedules during the registration period. Students who selected sections during the schedule revision period had no advance information regarding the instructional formats and so selection was made solely on times available and/or time preference. PSI-based sections were offered both in the morning and in the afternoon to offset any potential time bias.

Most assignments in the two formats were the same. Both groups took four 25-question unit tests, and students were required to achieve a specified level of mastery (C+ or 76%) before a grade was recorded. All four tests were available on the Monday of the second week of classes and each had a specified ending date (usually four weeks after the ending date of the previous test). All unit tests were taken at the University Testing Center during out-of-class hours; ten forms of each test were created following a list of 25 learning objectives each so that tests could be repeated and students could learn from their mistakes. All students took a common comprehensive final exam which could not be repeated. In addition, students in both groups completed a written personal communication analysis, an audience analysis paper, and a sentence outline for their second speech; the outline assignment was repeated until competency was reached (defined as a B or better for the assignment).

The performance component of this course was different in the two formats. In the self-contained sections, three speeches were given in front of the entire class and the GTA: speech 1 was ungraded, speech 2 was worth 15% of the final grade, and speech 3 was worth 20% of the final grade. Speech 3 was an adaptation of speech 2, based on a description of a

hypothetical audience provided by the instructor. None of these speeches could be repeated. In the PSI-based sections, the first two speeches were given in front of small audiences with two UTA evaluators. Each student was required to achieve a grade of B or better on both of these speeches before being allowed to give speech 3; the speeches were repeated until this level of mastery was achieved. However, no grade was recorded for the first two speeches. The third speech, which was also an adaptation of speech 2 for a specific audience, was given in front of a small group and the professor and was worth 35% of the final grade. This speech could not be repeated.

The Research Project

The Research Questions

Two goals formed the basis for this study: 1) to compare the PSI-based format of instruction with the self-contained format, and 2) to assess the degree to which self-contained sections represent an improvement over the lecture-recitation format by comparing ratings in the self-contained sections from these data with those in lecture-recitation sections reported in the previously-published study (Gray, et al. 1986).

The comparison between the PSI-based and self-contained instructional formats involved the following variables: perceived change in communication skills and the impact of the basic course on such change, change in communication apprehension, change in self-esteem, academic achievement in the course, and satisfaction with the instruction in and the quality, difficulty, and usefulness of the course. Since the self-contained model more closely parallels the PSI-based model than does the lecture-recitation format, it was expected that fewer significant differences in the quality of this instructional model would be found when compared to the PSI-based model but that the direction of the differences would continue to favor the PSI-

based method. Finally, it was predicted that the mean scores for change, attitude, and achievement would be higher for the students enrolled in the self-contained sections in 1985-86 than they were for the students in the lecture-recitation sections in 1982-83.

Method

Sample.

Data were collected from undergraduate students enrolled in the basic speech communication course during the fall semester of 1985-86. Two questionnaires were administered, the first during the second week and the second during the last week of classes. Slightly under one thousand students completed the first questionnaire; a similar number completed the second questionnaire. Social security numbers were matched for pretest and posttest data, and only those subjects who completed both waves of the testing were selected for the final sample. In all, eight hundred thirteen students (just over 80% of all students enrolled in the course) were included in that sample: one hundred seven were enrolled in two PSI-based sections and the remaining seven hundred six were enrolled in twenty-eight self-contained sections of the basic course. Students enrolled in evening sections of the course were not included in the sample due to possible confounding factors associated with the once-per-week meeting format or the evening meeting time.

Over 60 percent of the students in the sample were freshmen, 25 percent were sophomores, and the remaining 15 percent were split between juniors and seniors. Because the course is part of a competency requirement for the university, the sample was considered to be representative of the campus as a whole; all possible majors and minors were represented in the sample.

With regard to gender, females outnumbered males in the sample five to three. The overrepresentation of females was probably caused by some combination of the following

factors: 1) the ratio of females to males was approximately 60:40 at the university at the time of data collection; 2) females may have been more conscientious about attendance and filling in the questionnaires, thus being dropped from the sample in smaller numbers; and/or 3) females may have selected this communication course over the five other possible competency courses while males may have been represented more heavily in those other courses.

To assure comparability of sections at the outset of the study, Chi-square tests were computed for the following variables from the pretest data: class standing, grade expected in the course, approximate GPA, previous public speaking/forensic experience, and previous enrollment in the course. No significant differences were obtained. Similarly, t-tests were used to compare PSI-based sections with self-contained sections on perceptions of communication apprehension, and social self-esteem. No significant differences were identified from the pretest data, leading the researchers to conclude that there were no systematic differences between groups at the beginning of the study.

Procedure.

There were three phases to the data collection: pretest questionnaire, posttest questionnaire, and collection of grades from instructors' record books. Data were collected by classroom instructors; the researchers did not teach sections of the basic course during 1985-86.

The first questionnaire contained 91 items and was divided into five sections: 1) items measuring students' perceived communication competence (Self-Perception of Communication Abilities Scale); 2) items measuring students' expectations as to the effect of the course on improving their communication competence (Perceived Influence of the Course on Communication Abilities Scale); 3) the Personal Report of Communication Apprehension Scale (McCroskey 1970); 4) an adaptation of the Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale (Robinson and Shaver 1973);

and 5) demographic characteristics and expected grade in the course. The scales and items chosen reflected the expected behavioral outcomes for the course as stated in the standardized course syllabus.

The Self-Perception of Communication Abilities Scale (SPCA) was adapted from the earlier study by Gray, et al. (1986). This scale measured self-perceived ability in a range of communication skills: overall communication competence, listening, interpersonal interaction, nonverbal communication, use of language, conflict management, and so on. Students responded to a series of statements such as "I am a competent listener" using a five-point Likert-type scale (1=strongly agree; 5=strongly disagree). All sixteen items were summed and divided by sixteen to create this scale, with a low number indicating a high degree of self-perceived communication ability. Alpha reliability for this scale was .90.

The Perceived Influence of the Course on Communication Abilities Scale (PICA) was also adapted from Gray, et al. (1986). The pretest items for this sixteen-item scale measured the degree to which subjects expected taking the course to improve their personal communication abilities (alpha reliability = .94). For the pretest, subjects responded to a series of future-oriented statements such as "I expect to become a more competent listener as a result of taking this course" using a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly agree; 5 = strongly disagree). A low score on the PICA scale on the pretest suggested a student's perception that taking the course would improve the individual's communication ability.

McCroskey's 20-item Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA-20) scale was used to assess students' apprehension about giving speeches prior to practicing that ability in the course (McCroskey 1970; Powers and Smythe 1980). Students responded to a series of statements about speaking/communicating situations. Items such as "I feel relaxed and comfortable while speaking" comprise this scale. Items were coded so that a low score on this scale indicated a low level of communication

apprehension by a student (alpha reliability for the PRCA in this study = .95).

The adaptation of the Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale (FIS), a widely-used measure of social self-esteem (Robinson and Shaver 1973), was included to measure the impact of improving communication skills on self-esteem. Again, students responded to a series of statements about self-perceptions such as "I can make decisions confidently." A high score on this scale indicated a student's high self-esteem. The alpha reliability for this scale was .94.

Finally, demographic data and grade expectations were collected to check for similarities of students across groups. Specifically, seven characteristics were measured: class standing, gender, grade expected in the course, GPA, prior experience with course content, other communication courses taken, and whether or not the student had enrolled in but not completed the basic course in a previous semester.

The second questionnaire was administered during the final week of classes. It contained the same scales as were in the pretest: the SPCA, the PICA, the PRCA, and the FIS. For the posttest, items on the PICA scale were rephrased from future tense, "I expect to become a more competent listener as a result of taking this course," to past tense, "I have become a more competent listener as a result of taking this course." Consequently, the posttest PICA measured the degree to which students credited the course for improvement (or lack thereof) in their communication skills, a slightly different measure than the expectations extracted from the pretest PICA. The alpha reliability for the posttest measure was .94; alpha reliability for the entire combined scale was .92. The posttest questionnaire also contained questions about the final grade expected in the course, overall rating of the course, and ratings of the course in terms of usefulness, difficulty, and the degree to which the course met expectations. Additionally, all students were asked to rate their instructors in six areas: knowledge of material, ability to convey information, concern for students, effort, grading, and overall teaching ability. These evaluations were summed into a scale measuring general

attitude toward the instructor (ATTINST). Students in PSI-based sections responded to similar questions evaluating the teaching done by their UTAs. In all, the second questionnaire contained 106 items that were asked of students in both formats of the basic course.

Grades were gathered from records and grade books submitted by the instructors. This was done for the six grades in common to both formats: final speech, videotape assignment, speech outline, audience analysis paper, final exam, and final course grade. Since the university uses a 12 point grading scale, all grades recorded fell within a range of 1 point (E) to 12 points (A).

Analyses.

Descriptive statistics were computed for each of the individual items in the SPCA and PICA scales before summing those items into scales. As in the previous phase of this research, change scores were selected as the unit of comparison whenever possible, because this type of assessment was in keeping with the changes called for in the course behavioral objectives. In addition, use of the change scores helps to control for the range of attitudes and capabilities students bring to a basic course. In all cases, scores for T_2 were subtracted from scores for T_1 . T-tests were computed to assess pretest differences and posttest differences for all groups and also to measure within-group and between-group differences for all dependent variables. One-tailed t-tests were used to test for significant differences between groups on several of the dependent variables, based on the prediction that PSI-based sections would produce higher satisfaction, higher change, and better final grades. Significance levels were set at $p \leq .05$.

Results

Not tabled are results of t-test analyses run to examine changes in SPCA, PICA, PRCA, and FIS by the group of students as a whole. Behavioral objectives for the course call

for improvement in competence, decreases in apprehension, and enhancement of self-esteem, leading the researchers to predict these changes as a result of taking the course. In both formats of the course, students indicated increasing their levels of competence (SPCA scale) between the beginning and ending of the semester; the significance level for this improvement was $p = .000$, one-tailed. Not expected were the very consistent increases in mean scores between the pretest and posttest on the PICA scale, indicating lower levels of perceived influence of the course (the posttest measure) than expectations for contributions of the course on improving those skills (the pretest measure). Apparently, students had high expectations going into the course and they did feel that they improved significantly, but they did not credit the course with their improvements when it was over ($p = .000$). With regard to communication apprehension (PRCA), students in both groups reported a significant decrease on this scale at the end of the course ($p = .000$, one-tailed). Finally, students in both groups reported increases in social self-esteem from the beginning to the end of the class ($p = .008$, one-tailed). Overall, behavioral objectives for the course were met; the question to be answered was whether or not they were met more successfully in the PSI-based sections than in the self-contained sections.

Table 1 presents results of the *t*-test comparisons for the four scales. In particular, mean change scores were compared between the PSI-based and self-contained sections of the course for SPCA, PICA, PRCA, and FIS. One-tailed tests were used for these comparisons, based on the prediction that students in the PSI-based sections would view the course more favorably (SPCA), indicate higher levels of influence from the course (PICA), show larger decreases in communication apprehension (PRCA), and show larger increases in self-esteem (FIS).

The results were consistent with three of these expectations. Students in the PSI-based sections reported nearly two times more improvement in their communication abilities than did students in the self-contained sections, resulting in a significant difference of $p = .001$. Likewise, students in PSI-based sections credited the course

Table 1
t-tests of Mean Change Scores for SPCA, PICA, PRCA and FIS

Scale	PSI-Based (n=107) Mean Change	Self-Contained (n=706) Mean Change	df	t-value
Self-Perceptions of Communication Ability (SPCA)	0.62	0.36	751	5.20***
Perceived Influence of Course on Communication Ability (PICA)	-0.40	0.58	761	2.47**
Personal Report on Com- munication Apprehension (PRCA)	0.40	0.30	767	1.87*
Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale (FIS)	-0.11	-0.08	680	-0.64

* $p \leq .05$

** $p \leq .01$

*** $p \leq .001$

significantly more for those improvements than did students in the self-contained sections ($p \leq .01$), although neither group reported levels of influence at the end of the course that were as high as their expectations during the first week of classes, resulting in the negative change scores. Also as predicted, students in the PSI-based sections reported a significantly larger decrease in communication apprehension ($p \leq .05$). Of the four scales, only the self-esteem measure (FIS) did not result in a significant difference between the two groups.

In Table 2, comparisons are reported for attitude toward instructor (ATTINST) and course grades: final speech, videotape analysis paper, audience analysis paper, sentence outline, final exam, and final course grade. Because ATTINST and grades on assignments were reported on the final questionnaire only, mean scores were used as the unit of analysis for these t-tests. Again, one-tailed significance levels are reported, based on the prediction that PSI-based sections would result in higher levels of satisfaction and higher levels of success in the course. Also included on this table are t-test results for grade expectations on both the pretest and posttest, evaluations of the course, perceptions of difficulty of the assignments and perceptions of overall usefulness of the course to the student's life. PSI-based sections were expected to report higher grade expectations at the end of the course, higher evaluations of the course, and higher overall perceptions of the usefulness of the course. No differences were predicted for perceptions of the difficulty of assignments.

As expected, students in PSI-based sections reported significantly more positive attitudes toward their instructors and received significantly higher grades on the final speech, videotape analysis paper, audience analysis paper, and sentence outline. Means for PSI-based grades indicate that most students received grades of B+ on these assignments; most students in the self-contained sections received grades in the B range. This combination of grades resulted in significantly higher grades in the course for students in PSI-based sections. No significant differences were reported for

Table 2
t-tests of Means for Course Grades and Attitude/Perception Variables

Dependent Variable	PSI-Based (N=107) Mean	Self-Contained (n=706) Mean	df	t-value
Attitude toward Instructor (ATTINST)	1.69	2.27	795	6.65***
Final Speech Grade	10.09	8.64	803	6.5***
Videotape Analysis Grade	9.96	8.93	801	4.59***
Audience Analysis Grade	9.99	8.94	800	4.05***
Sentence Outline Grade	10.16	8.95	802	4.75***
Final Exam Grade	6.47	6.55	800	-0.25
Final Course Grade	9.45	8.01	808	6.24***
Grade Expected at T ₁	2.06	2.25	795	0.11
Grade Expected at T ₂	2.38	2.90	795	-6.53***
Rating of the Course	2.46	2.93	804	-5.33***

Dependent Variable	PSI-Based (N=107) Mean	Self-Contained (n=706) Mean	df	t-value
Degree to which Course Met Expectations	2.66	2.96	807	-2.57**
Difficulty of Assignments	2.57	2.53	806	0.46
Difficulty of Tests	1.95	1.91	805	0.44
Difficulty of Course Overall	2.56	2.47	804	1.24
Usefulness of Videotape Assignment	3.20	3.19	805	0.12
Usefulness of Speeches	1.84	2.22	805	-3.84***
Overall Usefulness of Course to Students Life	2.04	2.42	799	-3.63***
For Attitude Items: 1.0 = Positive Attitude; 5.0 = Negative Attitude				
For Course Grades: 1 = E; 12 = A				
For Expected Grades: 1 = A or A-; 5 = below C				
*p $\leq$.05				
**p $\leq$.01				
***p $\leq$.001				

grades on the final exam; means for both groups fell in the C range.

Comparing means on grade expectations, it appears that, although students in both groups expected to earn grades in the B range at the outset of the course, a greater proportion of PSI-based students expected to earn As and Bs in the course by the posttest. Similarly, students in the PSI-based sections rated the course more highly, felt more strongly that the course met their expectations, and perceived greater usefulness for the speeches and the course overall than did students in the self-contained sections. No significant differences were obtained for perceptions about difficulty of the course assignments or difficulty of the course overall.

Finally, Table 3 presents a comparison between mean change scores for the SPCA, PICA, PRCA and FIS scales collected in 1985-86 and data collected for those four scales in the same course in 1982-83 (Gray et al. 1986, 121). The numbers in the 1982-83 table have been converted to allow direct comparison by dividing the mean change score by the number of items in each scale. Two formats were compared in the earlier study: PSI-based sections with lecture-recitation sections. Only two significant differences were reported: 1) communication apprehension declined more in PSI-based sections, and 2) self-esteem increased more in PSI-based sections. Comparing changes between the two data sets, it is apparent that perceived communication competence (SPCA) improved to a greater degree in the present study in both formats of the course. Similarly, the course was given less credit for those improvements by students in the 1985-86 sample than by students in the 1982-83 sample (PICA). Changes in communication apprehension and self-esteem scales appear to be very consistent with changes in those variables in the earlier study. Comparing the self-contained sections with the lecture-recitation sections, self-contained sections appear to have produced improvements on all measured variables except for PICA (which declined for both groups in 1985-86). In summary, then, self-contained sections appear to have shown improvement over the traditional lecture-recitation model

Table 3
Comparison of 1982-83 and 1985-86 Mean Change Scores for Scales

Scale	PSI-Based		Lecture-Recitation	Self-Contained
	1982-83	1985-86	1982-83	1985-86
Self-Perceptions of Communication Ability (SPCA)	0.26	0.62	0.25	0.36
Perceived Influence of Course on Communication Ability (PICA)	-0.20	-0.40	-0.20	-0.58
Personal Report of Communication Apprehension (PRCA)	0.38	0.40	0.29	0.30
Janis-Field Feelings of Inadequacy Scale (FIS)	-0.12	-0.11	-0.06	-0.08

Note: For SPCA, the higher the number, the greater the perceived improvement.
 For PICA, the higher the number, the greater the perceived influence.
 For PRCA, the higher the number, the larger the decrease in anxiety.
 For FIS, the higher the number, the larger the increase in self-esteem.

for teaching the basic course, but the PSI-based model produced the most satisfactory results overall.

Implications

The results obtained from this study continue to point to PSI-based classrooms as being superior to other models for teaching the basic course in speech communication. Although it was predicted that movement to self-contained sections with many of the same features as the PSI-based sections would reduce the discrepancies between the PSI-based and the "regular" sections of the course, that expectation was not supported by the data. While self-contained sections show more positive outcomes in the 1985-86 study than lecture-recitation sections did in 1982-83, the PSI-based sections seem also to have offered more positive results to students in 1985-86 than they did in 1982-83 probably as a result of continued improvements in course materials and assignments. Although the outcomes in the self-contained sections are certainly positive, with students generally agreeing that the course was worthwhile and demonstrating learning as a result, PSI-based sections consistently fared better.

Of course, the applied nature of this research requires caution in interpreting the reported results. Graduate teaching assistants taught the self-contained sections of the course. Differences in expertise of instructor may have accounted for some of the differences identified between PSI-based and the other sections of the course. Similarly, the large number of GTAs as opposed to the very small number of PSI based instructors may have influenced the results. One almost certainly can assume that the faculty teaching PSI-based sections were well-qualified for the task while at least one or two of the GTAs would be rated as marginal or even poor instructors. Without the ability to control for teaching ability and style, such variables are left to chance in the overall equation.

On the other side of that caution, it should be noted, however, that past experience with grades and final

evaluations in this course demonstrate that regular faculty tend to grade assignments lower than new graduate assistants and that they tend to be held responsible by students for the problems with the course while GTAs are not. The lack of significant difference between groups on perceptions of difficulty and the tendency for students in PSI-based sections to achieve higher grades adds some support to the assumption that repeating assignments and functioning within a PSI-based framework contribute to students' success, regardless of instructor.

It is also necessary to note that faculty do only a small portion of the "teaching" in PSI-based sections. Undergraduate teaching assistants handle much of the activity processing, coaching, and interaction that underlies this model; faculty present descriptions of course assignments, handle general questions about the unit tests, lecture, and supervise the UTAs. This use of UTAs is stressed in the PSI model and was found to be a significant influence on perceptions of satisfaction in the Gray et al. study (1986) and in other reported research (e.g., Keller and Sherman 1982, 50; Born and Herbert cited in Sherman 1974, 33). Therefore, the students well may be reacting to the quality of teaching of their UTA since that is the person they interacted with most often. This possibility would lead to the speculation that the PSI-based format, in actuality, was taught by less well-trained and experienced instructors (UTAs) than were the self-contained sections (GTAs).

Clearly, if attainment of course objectives is a measure of success of a course, the self-contained sections examined in this study provide a favorable format for instruction and provide a more effective format than did the lecture-recitation format. They do not, however, provide a format equal to the pedagogical advantages of the PSI-based approach. Because the use of UTAs has demonstrated importance as an element of the PSI-based model, it seems reasonable to conclude that the lack of UTAs in the self-contained format may be a reason that this format does not attain results comparable to the PSI-based approach. Inclusion of a limited number of UTAs into these sections might help to alleviate some differences, while still keeping

control over the problems of training UTAs and locating qualified students to fill this role for so many sections. If nothing else, this study clearly demonstrates the effectiveness of a PSI-based approach to teaching sections of the multiple-section basic speech communication course. The PSI-based approach used continued to show advantages in the concerns of quality, cost-effectiveness, and interaction cited earlier. If large basic courses are to optimize learning while minimizing the disadvantages associated with the PSI-based approach, continued field experimentation is warranted.

References

- Berryman-Fink, Cynthia, and Lucille Pederson. 1981. "Testing the Effects of a Competency-Based Interpersonal Communication Course." *The Southern Speech Communication Journal* 46: 251-262.
- Born, David G., and Emily W. Herbert. 1974. "A Further Study of Personalized Instruction for Students in Large University Classes." In J.G. Sherman, ed., *Personalized System of Instruction: 41 Germinal Papers* (30-35). Menlo Park, CA: W.A. Benjamin, Inc.
- Boylan, Hunter R. 1980. "PSI: A Survey of Users and Their Implementation Practices." *Journal of Personalized Instruction* 4: 40-43.
- Buerkel-Rothfuss, Nancy, and Janet Yerby. November 1982. "PSI vs. a More Traditional Model for Teaching the Basic Course." Speech Communication Association Convention, Louisville, KY.
- Fuss-Reineck, Marilyn, and William J. Seiler. April 1982. "Developing the Personalized System of Instruction for the Speech Communication Classroom." Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, WI.

- Gallup, Howard F. 1974. "Problems in the Implementation of a Course in Personalized Instruction." In J.G. Sherman, ed., *Personalized System of Instruction: 41 Germinial Papers* (128-135). Menlo Park, CA: W.A. Benjamin, Inc.
- Gibson, James W., Michael S. Hanna, and Bill M. Huddleston. 1985. "The Basic Speech Course at U.S. Colleges and Universities: IV." *Communication Education* 34: 281-291.
- Gray, Pamela L. 1984. "A Comparative Study of Two Formats of the Basic Course in Speech Communication: PSI-Based and Lecture-Recitation." Diss. The Pennsylvania State U.
- Gray, Pamela L., Nancy L. Buerkel-Rothfuss, and Janet Yerby. 1986. "A Comparison Between PSI-Based and Lecture-Recitation Formats of Instruction in the Introductory Speech Communication Course." *Communication Education* 35: 111-125.
- Hanisko, Sandra, Melissa Beall, Diana Prentice, and William Seiler. April 1982. "Competency-Based Peer Evaluation in the Speech Communication Classroom: An Experimental Training Program." Central States Speech Association Convention. Milwaukee, WI.
- Hanna, Michael S., and James W. Gibson. 1983. "Programmed Instruction in Communication Education: An Idea Behind its Time." *Communication Education* 32: 1-7.
- Heun, Linda, Richard Heun, and Linnea Ratcliff. 1976. "Individualizing Speech Communication Instruction." *Communication Education* 25: 185-190.
- Hursh, Daniel E. 1976. "Personalized System of Instruction: What Do the Data Indicate?" *Journal of Personalized Instruction* 1: 91-96.

- Johnson, Kent B. 1982. "Proctor-Training for Natural Control." In J.G. Sherman, R.S. Ruskin, and G.B. Semb, eds., *The Personalized System of Instruction: 48 Siminal Papers* (168-175). Lawrence, KS: TRI Publications.
- . 1974. "Ten Years of Personalized Instruction." *Teaching of Psychology* 1: 4-9.
- Keller, Fred S., and J. Gilmour Sherman, eds. 1974. *The Keller Plan Handbook*. Menlo Park, CA: W.A. Benjamin, Inc.
- . 1982. *The PSI Handbook: Essays on Personalized Instruction*. Menlo Park, CA: W.A. Benjamin, Inc.
- Kulik, James A., Chen-Lin C. Kulik, and Peter A. Cohen. 1979. "A Meta-Analysis of Outcome Studies of Keller's Personalized System of Instruction." *American Psychologist* 34: 307-318.
- McCroskey, James C. 1970. "Measures of Communication-Bound Anxiety." *Speech Monographs* 37: 269-277.
- Powers, William G., and Mary Jeanette Smythe. 1980. "Communication Apprehension and Achievement in a Performance-Oriented Basic Communication Course." *Human Communication Research* 6: 146-152.
- Robinson, John P., and Phillip R. Shaver. 1973. *Measures of Social Psychological Attitudes*. Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research.
- Scott, Michael D., and Thomas J. Young. 1976. "Personalizing Communication Instruction." *Communication Education* 25: 211-221.
- Seiler, William J. 1983. "PSI: An Attractive Alternative for the Basic Speech Communication Course." *Communication Education* 32: 15-25.
- . April 1982. "A Rationale for Using the Personalized System of Instruction (PSI) in the Speech Communication Classroom." Central States Speech Association Convention, Milwaukee, WI.

- Seiler, William J., and Marilyn Fuss-Reineck. 1986. "Developing the Personalized System of Instruction for the Basic Speech Communication Course." *Communication Education* 35: 126-133.
- Sherman, J. Gilmour, ed. 1974. *Personalized System of Instruction: 41 Germinal Papers*. Menlo Park, CA: W.A. Benjamin, Inc.
- Sherman, J. Gilmour, Robert S. Ruskin, and R.M. Lazar, eds. 1978. *Personalized Instruction in Education Today*. San Francisco, CA: San Francisco Press, Inc.
- Sherman, J. Gilmour, Robert S. Ruskin, and George B. Semb, eds. 1982. *The Personalized System of Instruction: 48 Seminal Papers*. Lawrence, KS: TRI Publications.
- Smith, B.B., and W.H. Weitzer. 1978. "Factors Affecting the Quality of Proctor-Student Interaction." In J.G. Sherman, R.S. Ruskin, and R.M. Lazar, eds., *Personalized Instruction in Education Today* (77-87). San Francisco, CA: San Francisco Press, Inc.
- Staton-Spicer, Ann Q., and Ronald E. Bassett. 1980. "A Mastery Learning Approach to Competency-Based Education for Public Speaking Instruction." *Communication Education* 29: 171-182.
- Taveggia, Thomas C. 1976. "Personalized Instruction: A Summary of Comparative Research, 1967-1974." *American Journal of Physics* 44: 1028-1033.
- Taylor, Anita. April 1986. "A Modified Approach to PSI (Personalized System of Instruction) in COMM 100 Introduction to Communication." Eastern Speech Association Convention. Atlantic City, N.J.

Using Plays and Novels As Case Studies in the Basic Course

Roger Smitter

Introduction

Case studies, in the form of plays and novels, provide an excellent way of integrating concepts, theories and experience for students in the basic speech communication course. In addition to making the argument for using novels and plays as case studies, this essay describes strategies for using them in a basic course.

Definitions

Zaleznik and Moment provide the simplest definition of case, saying it is a "concrete instance of what people do and say" (viii). Lee defines a case as a "narrative statement about some happening involving people" (1-36). The speech communication and law school-business school literature suggest several generalizations about what constitutes a case study.

1. A case is a *narrative* containing specific information about complex events described in realistic terms. A case tells students what happened while allowing them to discover for themselves why it happened. The case focuses on people and their actions and not on concepts or abstractions. Students must sort through all the given facts in a case to find the relevant ones. The narrative form helps hold the reader's interest.



2. A case presents a *problem* to be solved. The narrative uses conflict to build toward a climax. It draws the reader into the story. He or she seeks ways of dealing with the problem. Such solutions demand a well integrated understanding of the case and course material.

3. A case is *incomplete*. Cases never provide all the information about the events described. Identifying the additional information required to understand the case becomes part of the learning process. Students and teacher make a leap from the known facts to untried generalizations when analyzing the case.

4. A case does *more than illustrate* a single principle or theory. Students and teacher choose from many textbook concepts, definitions and theories in order to explain the case. Such choices lead to an understanding of course content on several levels.

Case studies however cannot be understood apart from an appreciation of *case method*. It demands instructor and students assume new roles in the learning process. They must explore the case together. The method demands a much reduced profile for the instructor. The instructor does not lecture about the case. Rather, he or she poses a series of carefully planned questions which elicit discussion in class while leading students to the place where they can draw their own conclusions about the case. Such understanding grows out of an application of the course material to understanding and explaining the case. The case and the course content, *not* the instructor, become the focus of the class hour (see Hammond, Hargrove, Hatcher).

Advantages

According to Gibson, students develop two important *habits* when using the case method. First is the *habit of analysis*. Broadly interpreted, this means students learn to ask questions so as to understand the facts of a case before attempting an analysis of it. Students realize the facts of any situation are highly inter-related. Students also learn to make choices, selecting the most salient facts from the case

and the most useful concepts and theories from course content in order to explain the case. In the process, students develop an ability to analyze with new situations which arise in the world beyond the classroom and textbooks.

A second habit concerns *responsibility*. Students must be prepared to contribute in class, listen to others and argue for the interpretation of a case. Students learn to be responsible to the facts of the case. They cannot wish the facts were otherwise or impose idealistic solutions on the characters (Gibson).

Clearly, a novel or play provides a narrative in which conflict arises out of dialogue. The characters exist in realistic situations which engage the interest of the undergraduate student. Novels and plays present problem situations to which the students can apply course concepts to generate a solution. The basic speech communication course deals with concepts and theories which would help explain the communication within the case.

Given this overview of what others have said about the case method, three advantages exist for using a novel or play as a case study in the basic course.

1. *Integration of course content.* Cases help students better understand the complexity of human communication behavior. Students can see how the pieces of course content fit together to make sense of how people use symbols. Course content becomes more than a series of lists or topics to memorize.

The first advantage exists because novels and plays describe human behavior as it occurs, often in complicated and convoluted form, not in tidy packages. Most textbooks recognize that communication is indeed a complex set of inter-related behaviors. Many suggest that it is best seen from a systems point of view. Yet, by the very nature of expository writing, textbooks make the integration of material difficult. The novel or play used as a case study can help students (who often have not been asked to integrate material on their own) begin to see how one behavior influences another.

2. *Selection of course content.* Closely related to this first advantage is the way in which cases help students prioritize

course content. When analyzing the complexity of a novel or play, students come to realize that not everything in the textbook or professor's lectures is of equal importance in understanding the case. Students must select the content which is most useful to the particular problems presented in the case. In this process, students begin to develop the skills of judgement and discernment.

3. *Illustration of course content.* Case studies give flesh and blood to otherwise abstract concepts related to communication. For example, most textbooks say communication is best thought of as a process. After reading a full novel or play, the students may see in an especially vivid way how choices about communication behavior at one point in the narrative influence a character's behavior at subsequent points.

These advantages are especially important in the basic course which is often populated by the first or second year students. Research into student cognitive development says students need to move from the concrete level of learning to more abstract abilities. With cases, they are making the adjustment from learning by rote memory to learning to select and analyze material. They are beginning to realize no one answer is correct and that they can select from a variety of answers in a given situation. They also are learning that they must be able to support why they chose a particular answer.

The rest of this essay offers suggestions for a novel and a play which the author has used with success during the interpersonal and small group unit of a basic speech communication course. It will focus on the key textbook concepts which explain the cases. The essay concludes with several generalizations about using novels and plays in the basic course.

Two Sample Cases

Two case studies, both of which have been used in the classroom by the author, will be described here. In each case, the analysis will provide a suggestion of the key

communication concepts for understanding the novel or play.

Goodbye, Columbus

In Philip Roth's novel, wealthy college student Brenda has a summer love affair with Neil. He does not suit her family's plans for her, however. Neil's low self-esteem makes him easy for Brenda to dominate until their relationship reaches a point at which she must choose between him and her family.

The novel supplies an abundant amount of material for discussion in less than 100 pages. It is especially useful for showing how relationships can begin, blossom and die. The key communication concepts involve relationship development and disclosure. Brenda and Neil move much too rapidly toward physical intimacy without the necessary disclosure to sustain a relationship. They engage in several conversations marked by clever repartee. Yet, when they come close to discussing their feelings or plans for the future, they back away from a statement about their personal thoughts, often to engage in physical contact. About one-third of the way through the novel, Brenda asks Neil about why he works in a lowly job in the public library. She says it is her parents who want to know. He explains:

"Bren, I'm not planning anything. I haven't planned a thing in three years . . . I'm not a planner." After all the truth I'd suddenly given her, I shouldn't have ruined it for myself with that final lie I added, "I'm a liver."

"I'm a pancreas," she said.

"I'm a—"

And she kissed the absurd game away. . . . (Roth, 36).

These scenes and several others become excellent illustrations of how people avoid disclosure in relationships. Over the course of the novel, the reader sees how undisclosed feelings erupt in conflict which the relationship cannot accommodate. The final scene works especially well as an example of conflict because the reader has seen the development of the relationship.

Glass Menagerie

Tennessee William's play has of course become a classic of the American stage. Laura is a disappointment to her dominating mother, Amanda. She does not attract suitors in numbers which her mother enjoyed as a young southern belle. Laura is shy and retiring in part because she is overly conscious of her slight limp. Laura's brother Tom is antagonistic toward his mother, who fears he will turn to alcohol and desert the family as her husband did.

The play comes to a climax when, at the mother's urging, Tom brings a friend from work to dinner. The mother quickly labels Jim as Laura's suitor. Jim turns out to be a boy from high school to whom Laura was secretly attracted. When they are left alone in the family dining room, Laura shares with Jim some of her feelings about him and more importantly about herself. Jim gives her praise. They share a kiss. But, then, Laura is brought down from her new heights when Jim reveals he is engaged to be married.

The key to understanding communication in this case is the interplay of self-concept and disclosure. The reader can readily understand how Laura's weak self-concept evolved given the domination of her mother. The mother's verbosity simply does not allow Laura to say much. The play also illustrates how the same verbosity and domination have a different effect on Tom. He rebels with words but usually gives in to his mother's wishes. Laura's rebellion takes much more subtle form, frustrating her mother more than Tom's behavior.

The lessons to be learned about self-concept come most clearly from studying Laura's pattern of communication. She has been taught she is shy and timid and therefore acts that way. Williams shows in a number of places how subtle messages can help reinforce the self-concept a person holds. In the following dialogue, Laura and her mother argue about why she still has not found a husband.

Laura: I'm crippled.

Amanda: Nonsense. Laura, I've told you never, never to use that word. Why, you're not crippled, you just have a little defect . . . hardly noticeable, even. When people

have some slight disadvantage like that, they cultivate other things to make up for it . . . develop charm . . . and vivacity . . . and charm! One thing your father had plenty of . . . was charm (Williams 65).

The message here is one which disconfirms Laura as a person. She cannot develop other attributes until she acknowledges and accepts her limp. The passage reveals how words can become powerful labels which affect what people see. Her mother's words prevent growth from occurring. Students can see in this and other scenes the subtle way in which communication influences the growth of the self-concept.

Principles of Using Cases

This discussion suggests ways to use novels and plays as cases in the basic course. The paper will look first at how material for cases should be selected. Then, specific information about utilizing cases will be offered.

Case Selection

Clearly, a play or novel should involve a complex set of human relationships which reveal communication problems at several levels. How characters use dialogue should be the primary means by which the reader learns about those characters and the problems in their relationships. Obviously plays present an advantage in that the student has only dialogue. This approximates real life more closely than the novel in which the character's inner thoughts are revealed along with dialogue.

The novel or play should be realistic in tone. Dialogue and settings need not be exclusively those of the contemporary scene. Yet, they should be similar to ones students encounter. The cases need not always focus on youth as implied in the cases described above. Yet, the struggles of youth often involve learning new forms of communicating, relationship development, and changes in self-concept. These topics are central to most basic classes.

To the extent the case engages the reader at an intellectual and an emotional level, it will prove useful.

The case should have a serious intent which can be analyzed on several levels. Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* contains delightful dialogue which mocks social norms. But, once this point is made, not much else can be said about the communication in the play. For the purpose of the basic course, its function is limited to this one dimension.

The case should help students move beyond simplistic answers. Students must be challenged to make choices concerning the case. That is, the case must be complex enough so that they must sort out many issues to get to the key one. In this process, students must prioritize the course content, showing how one or two concepts or terms lead to an understanding of the nature of the communication in the case. The key may be the failure of characters to disclose.

Methods of Implementation

A class session of two (at the maximum) can be used to discuss the communication problems in the case. The instructor needs to make the learning goal clear: *that the case serves as an extended illustration of many concepts covered in class and that the role of discussion is to understand and explain the communication in the case.*

A three step design works well in discussing a case. First, the instructor should have students discuss what they see as the "communication problems" in the case. Such problems should be expressed in layman's terms and written down on a newsprint pad or chalkboard for all to see. The statements can arise from the students' first reactions to the case and from their own experience. The instructor should attempt to keep students from engaging in too much analysis of why the problems occur until all the statements of problems have been exhausted.

Then, these problem statements should be grouped and organized so that some system emerges for classifying them. Here, students can use course content to help explain how and why the problems emerged. Here also the skills of using

the case method are essential. The instructor should take a facilitator's role, using questions to raise issues and clarify students' comments. The questions help students make connections between concepts. The instructor supplies the questions. The students arrive at reasonable answers which they express and defend.

A further step can then be for the class to generate ideas on how the analysis of the case might lead to a solution of the communication problems. The instructor might pick a particular scene in the case and ask students to suggest changes in the characters' communication behavior. The beauty of this approach is that it forces students (and teachers) to deal with the problems as they exist. That is, the class cannot say "The characters must trust each other." They must deal with dialogue which has lead the characters to a lack of trust. Such an analysis will help students understand the components of the trust concept as they apply to a particular scene.

Finally, the instructor should be prepared to offer a brief summary which pulls together the analysis and advice offered during the class discussion. It is also the only time the instructor should take a dominant role in the classroom. This step is essential to learning. During a fast-paced discussion, not all students immediately understand how the diverse pieces of analysis fit together. A summary at the end of the class hour which incorporates student analysis into a whole will be especially helpful.

Writing assignments can easily be used to develop students' skills in analyzing cases. Writing assignments can be made prior to class discussion to help guarantee that they will come to class prepared to talk. Writing assignments can be made after class discussion of the case also.

In-class group reports about the case are another alternative. However, multiple reports on the same case can become highly repetitious without planning to deal with the case. Following the reports, the whole class can discuss the generalizations about communication which the reports reveal.

Some cautions when using novels and plays as cases in the basic course should be noted. Instructors would also be

advised to rotate the novels or plays over a series of semesters. The student grapevine works too well in supplying the information about what key concepts are most useful for each discussion or writing assignment. To work well, the case study method must force students to encounter a new situation and make sense of it on their own.

Preparing case studies creates additional time demands on instructors. One compensation is that the method becomes an opportunity for doing some reading outside traditional textbooks. It also becomes a means of seeing a set of material which may have been taught many times in a new way as a new problem in a new case is encountered.

The author has worked with this method in small classes. Some problems would exist in using this method in a multi-sectioned basic course where recitation sessions are covered by TAs. Training of the TAs in the case method would be mandatory.

Students may prefer the passive learning which occurs in lectures. Students could be introduced to the method slowly by having them analyze several shorter cases before taking on a full novel or play. The rationale behind the case method needs to be explained clearly to students. The basic speech communication course is an ideal setting to introduce students to a more active form of learning. The advantages of helping students develop their intellectual skills and realize the extent to which knowledge in communication is integrated would seem to offset these problems.

Summary

This essay examined the rationale behind the case method as it applies to the basic course in communication. It suggested that a basic course which attempts to introduce students to a wide range of communication topics would be well served by the case method approach which uses novels and plays. It outlined the communication issues involved in two cases. Finally, specific advice for selecting and implementing novels and plays as case studies in the basic course is offered.

Students can learn the basics of communication by examining situations in which human interaction is described in detail. Furthermore, students can and should do more than memorize terms and lists of advice for communication behavior. The process of analyzing a case requires more than rote memory. The case method helps students make sense of their everyday communication encounters. Such knowledge will carry forward to the encounters they experience beyond the classroom and college. Before such application can occur, they need to understand the complexity of communication and how to deal with such complexity. In the process of dealing with a complex case, students refine their knowledge of course content while developing the wisdom to apply that information.

References

- Corey, E. 1980. "Case Method Teaching." HBS Case Services, Harvard Business School.
- Dooley, A. and W. Skinner. 1977. "Casing Casemethod Methods." *Academy of Management Review*, no. 2.
- Gibson, H. 1954. "The Case Method in Human Relations." *Accent on Teaching*. S. French, ed. New York, NY: Harper.
- Hammond, J. 1980. "Learning by the Case Method." HBS Case Services, Harvard Business School.
- Hargrove, M. "The Case Method." HBS Case Services, Harvard Business School.
- Hatcher, J. n.d. "The Case Method: Its Philosophical and Educational Concept." HBS Case Services, Harvard Business School.
- Lee, I. 1954. *Customs and Crises in Communication*. New York, NY: Harper.

- Perry, W. Jr. 1970. *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years: A Scheme*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.
- Roth, P. 1959. *Goodbye, Columbus*. New York, NY: Bantam.
- Williams, T. 1970. *The Glass Menagerie*. New Directions.
- Zalenick, A. and D. Moment. 1964. *Casebook on Interpersonal Behavior in Organizations*. New York, NY: Wiley.

A Unit on Relationship Termination for the Basic Course

Lynn A. Phelps

*We can't go on just
holding on to ties...now
that we're living
separate lives.*

P. Collins

"It merely died out . . . I'm not really sure how it ended. We just went our separate ways" This is a common response when an individual is asked how a close relationship with a friend or loved one ended. When it comes to probing about break-up strategies, or more importantly the communication skills displayed during the event, most people shrug their shoulders at such bizarre questions. Yet the concept that our basic communication courses should teach students the communication skills necessary to continue to form relationships throughout their life without regard to terminating any of these relationships is equally bizarre. As Baxter (1979, 215) stated: "To presume that actors go through life 'stockpiling' an unlimited number of relationships without occasional strategic deletion strikes against common sense." Individuals must eventually reach a point in life where each new relationship is offset with the termination or de-escalation of a previous relationship. From an Altman and Taylor (1973) exchange theory perspective, each relationship has its own costs and rewards. Cost may be expenditure of time, psychological energy, and/or restrictions from engaging in other relationships. Rewards may be pleasures derived, aid the accomplishment of a task,

Paper presented at the Midwest Basic Course Director's Conference, February, 1989 at Wichita, Kansas.

and/or an opportunity to learn more about oneself from engaging in a relationship. While it would probably be a mistake to assume that an individual is constantly evaluating his or her relationships in terms of costs or rewards, there must be a limit to the number of relationships that an individual is capable of engaging in. According to Knapp (1984), an individual pays special attention to the cost/reward paradigm when he or she feels especially happy or sad to determine how that particular state came about.

Do relationships ever actually terminate? It can be argued that once a relationship has formed, it will always exist. Even though the individuals decide not to interact on a physical level, the psychological impact of the relationship is still present. Rather than termination, the relationship has merely been redefined. For example, if two friends decide to end their physical relationship, that part of the relationship may be over, but the influence of the friend is an ingrained aspect of the other's self-concept. Therefore, any relationship, regardless of its length, has an effect upon both individuals and can never be terminated. Instead, the dissolution of the relationship prompts a redefinition of the situation. Stewart addresses this issue by contending that in any relationship a "spiritual child" is born. This "child" may grow into a beautiful person or may die or worst of all may grow to become an ugly child. But the child is always with us even if the relationship ceases to exist. In redefining a relationship, each party is required to adjust his or her life to compensate for the physical and emotional absence of the other. The notion that some individuals are more adept at adjustment than others may explain why some individuals find ending a relationship relieving (Wilmot, 1980) while other individuals find it painful (Phillips and Wood, 1983).

The purpose of this essay is to suggest nine units on relationship termination which might be taught in a basic communication course and to suggest exercises which might be used to enhance these units. An instructor might select one or more of the units and add them to a course they presently teach or use all eight units in a special topics course. While the relationship termination units may seem most appropriate for a basic interpersonal or group

communication course, with minor adaptation the units could also be used in a wide variety of courses. The exercises range from projects calling for research papers to experiential activities requiring less than thirty minutes of class time.

Units on Relationship Termination

1. Definition of Relationship Termination

A unit on relationship termination will necessitate a discussion on what is the concept of "relationship termination." Students, after reading any one of a number of excellent sources, can discuss the differences among the terms of relationship termination, redefinition, de-escalation, dissolution, disengaging and ending a relationship. What are the connotations of each term? Would you use one term for a friendship and another for a lover?

SOURCES

- Duck, S.W. 1980. "Personal Relationships Research in the 1980s: Toward an Understanding of Complex Human Sociality." *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 44: 114-119.
- De Stephen D. 1985. "The Need to Integrate Relational Termination into the Teaching of Interpersonal Communication." Central State Speech Association Convention. Chicago, IL.

2. An Overview of Relationship Termination

This unit is designed to discuss differences among social encounters, friendships, divorce and death. Much has been written about divorce and death and it is probably very possible for you to bring in experts from across campus to discuss these topics. I make it very clear that divorce and death are special types of relationship termination and that these types of termination will not be the focus of the unit. It

is interesting to have students discuss the crucial variables in each of the above four situations. What is it that makes the termination process different between a social encounter and a friendship? Between a social encounter and a death?

SOURCES

- Cahn, D.D. 1987. *Letting Go: A Practical Theory of Relationship Disengagement and Re-engagement*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. Chapters 4, 6 & 7.
- Wilmont, W.W., D.A. Carbaugh and L.A. Baxter. 1984. "Communicative Strategies Used to Terminate Romantic Relationships." International Communication Association Convention, San Francisco, CA.

3. Models of Relationship Termination

Knapp's Model

- Stage I. Differentiating
- Stage II. Circumscribing
- Stage III. Stagnating
- Stage IV. Avoiding
- Stage V. Terminating

The ten stages (the first five deal with relationship development and the second five deal with termination) of interaction according to Knapp (1984) have been widely cited. While the stages are not based on any empirical research, they do form a useful framework from which to analyze the formation and dissolution of relationships. The first stage of relationship termination is labeled differentiating and represents the stage where the "we" in a relationship is transformed into "I" when the parties are no longer interpersonally close as a result of separate interests and activities. The second stage, circumscribing, is characterized by a decrease in information quality and quantity, resulting in superficial and restrained communication. The third phase of stagnating involves not

broaching some areas of discussion, as each part claims to "know" how the conversation will end. The fourth stage of avoiding is similar to stagnating, but this phase is characterized by physical separation. The final stage is the actual disengagement which may occur rapidly and often labeled "sudden death" or may occur gradually and often labeled "passing away."

Duck's Model of Dissolving Personal Relationships

Threshold I. I can't stand this any more!

(Intrapsychic phase)

Threshold II. I'd be justified in withdrawing.

(Dyadic phase)

Threshold III. I mean it (Social phase)

Threshold IV. It's now inevitable.

(Grave Dressing phase)

Duck's model of relationship termination is similar to Knapp's but appears to place more emphasis on the psychological aspect of termination. Neither model has been tested empirically. Later in this paper, a class exercise will be proposed to test each of these models. DeVito (1989) discusses seven different models of relationship development and/or termination.

SOURCES

- Duck, S. 1986. *Human Relationships: An Introduction to Social Psychology*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publishing Co. 90-111.
- Knapp, M.L. 1984. *Interpersonal Communication and Human Relation*. Newton, MA: Allyn and Bacon. 29-58.
- DeVito, J. 1986. *The Interpersonal Communication Book*. New York, NY: Harper and Row Publishers. 246-251.

4. Self-Disclosure and Relationship Termination

Self-disclosure is only one of the many variables which can be discussed in light of relationship termination. Other

variables might be trust, empathy, self-concept, self-esteem, assertiveness, communication apprehension, and perception to name only a few. Concerning self-disclosure, do individuals who self-disclose terminate more relationships? Fewer? Or do they terminate relationships in a different manner?

SOURCES

Baxter, L.A. 1979. "Self-Disclosure as a Relationship Disengagement Strategy." *Human Communication Research*, 5: 215-222.

5. The Reversal Hypothesis

The reversal hypothesis has received wide attention in the literature and yet there is very little empirical support for the hypothesis. Do relationships come apart in the reverse manner in which they are formed? While this may seem like an intuitively attractive proposition, there is little support or refutation for the proposition. Students will eagerly engage in a debate on the merits of such a hypothesis.

SOURCES

Baxter, L.A. 1983. "Relationship Disengagement: An Examination of the Reversal Hypothesis." *The Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 47: 85-98.

6. The Beginning Cycle of Termination

This unit examines the relationship termination process using case study evidence. Students can be asked to write descriptive accounts of same sex or opposite sex relationships terminations which they have participated in and then compare their accounts to the ones listed in the sources below. Does each relationship terminate in such a

unique manner that it is impossible to find any commonality? Often times students will see that their relationships have terminated in a manner very similar to how others have terminated relationships.

SOURCES

- Hill, C.T., Z. Rubin and L.A. Peplau. 1979. "Breakups Before Marriage and the End of 103 Affairs." *Divorce and Separation*, 64-82.
- Weiss, R.B. 1975. "The Erosion of Love and Persistence of Attachment." *Marital Separation*, 36-46.
- Perlman, D. and S. Duck. 1987. *Intimate Relationships: Development, Dynamics, and Deterioration*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publishing Company, 239-296.

7. Disengagement Strategies

- I. Positive Tone
- II. Negative Identity Management
- III. Justification
- IV. Behavioral De-escalation
- V. De-escalation

What are the strategies people use to terminate relationships? Students can be asked what strategies they use or have had used upon them in terminating relationships in the past. Again, if students are first asked to write an account of one of their relationships which has terminated, they will then have a vehicle to compare their situation to any theoretical paradigm. Students will often offer suggestions for changing the model after comparing their situation to the proposed model.

SOURCES

- Baxter, L.A. 1982. "Strategies for Ending Relationships: Two Studies." *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 46: 223-241.

- Baxter, L.A. 1984. "Trajectories of Relationship Disengagement." *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 1: 29-48.
- Baxter, L.A. and J. Philpott, 1982. "Attribution-Based Strategies for Initiating and Terminating Friendships." *Communication Quarterly*, 30: 217-224.
- Cahn, D.D. 1987. *Letting Go: A Practical Theory of Relationship Disengagement and Re-Engagement*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, p. 187-205. (Chapter 10)

8. The Farewell Address

- I. Summarizing the substance of the discourse
- II. Signaling the impending decreased access between the communicators
- III. Signaling supportiveness

How do we signal decreased access between ourself and others? Students will eagerly offer examples of how others signal that they want a change in the relationship — either positive or negative. So often our courses only spend time examining how we signal relationship development. This unit will provide students with an opportunity to examine methods for telling others to change interpersonal relationships.

SOURCES

- Baxter, L.A. and J. Philpott. 1980. "Relationship Disengagement: A Process View." Paper presented at Speech Communication Association.
- Albert, S. and S. Kessler, 1978. "Ending Social Encounters." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 14: 541-553.

9. Managing Relational Termination

- I. Break the Loneliness-Depression Cycle
- II. Take Time Out
- III. Bolster Self-esteem

- IV. Remove or Avoid Uncomfortable Symbols
- V. Seek Support
- VI. Avoid Extreme Statements
- VII. Avoid Repeating Negative Patterns
- VIII. Resist Comparisons

Relationship termination is part of relationship formation. Therefore it is important that we know how to manage the termination process. Relationship termination, regardless of whether one is the initiator or not, results in change for both individuals. This change most often comes in the form of redefining one's identity and who one associates with as friends. One's identity or sense of self is primarily a product of the roles and role functions one plays within a particular relationship. How does one avoid negative patterns and resist comparisons with a third party who might have entered the relationship picture? The literature does offer a number of suggestions which students find useful in handling what can be a very traumatic situation.

SOURCES

- Duck, W.W. 1982. "A Topography of Relationship Disengagement and Dissolution." In S.W. Duck, ed., *Personal Relationships 4: Dissolving Personal Relationships* (pp. 1-30). London: Academic Press.
- Knapp, M.L. 1984. *Interpersonal Communication and Human Relation*. Newton, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Knapp, M.L., R.P. Hart, G.W. Friedrich, and G.M. Shulman. 1973. "The Rhetoric of Goodbye: Verbal and Nonverbal Correlates of Human Leave-Taking." *Speech Monographs*, 40: 182-198.
- Miller, G.R. and M. Parks. 1982. "Communication in Dissolving Relationships." In S.W. Duck, ed., *Personal Relationships 4: Dissolving Personal Relationships* (pp. 127-154). London: Academic Press.

Exercises on Relationship Termination

1. **Model Exercise:** One of the most useful exercises for teaching relationship termination is to have students write a detailed description of a relationship development/termination situation in which they participated. Students are encouraged to write about a variety of types of relationships: friendships, work relations, same sex relationships, as well as opposite sex dating type relationships. After the description has been written, students are given Knapp's ten stages, DeVito's five stages, and Altman and Taylor's three stages and asked to analyze their relationship according to how they perceived it occurred. Finally, students are asked to rewrite the model based upon their experiences. Almost every relationship will deviate somewhat from the proposed models and students enjoy being able to rewrite the models to reflect how things happen in the "real world."

2. **Analysis of Music Exercise:** Have students select their favorite termination song, make a cassette tape of the song, and prepare a handout containing the words to the song. Each student is provided five minutes to explain why they selected the particular song, do an analysis of the words according some model of relationship termination, and play an excerpt from the song. Another version of this exercise is for the instructor to provide the class with a song and have each student write a 1-3 page analysis of the lyrics applying a termination model. A third version of this exercise is to have students do an analysis of the top ten songs for a particular week. How many of the songs are relationship termination songs? Or different types of music may be used. Some class members could analyze the top forty of country music, others rock and still others could use jazz.

Listed below are examples of song titles which an instructor can use during this exercise.

Song Title	Musician
Dreams	Stevie Nicks
If Leaving Me Is Easy	Phil Collins
I Don't Care Anymore	Phil Collins

Hello, I Must Be Going
 Never Say Goodbye
 You're Still My Man
 1000 Umbrella's
 'Til I Can Make It
 On My Own
 I Miss You
 My Loves Leavin'
 No One in the World
 No More Tears
 Funny How Love Is
 Morristown
 Nevermind
 This Time
 All Cried Out

Phil Collins
 Bon Jovi
 Whitney Houston
 XTC Skylarking

 Kenny Rogers
 Klymax
 Steve Winwood
 Anita Baker
 Anita Baker
 Fine Young Cannibals
 Nashville Bluegrass Band
 Replacements
 INXS
 Lisa Lisa

3. Termination Card Exercise: This exercise allows students to display their creativity while at the same time allowing them to show some application of a theoretical principle. Recently, Hallmark Greeting Cards has begun to market a line of divorce/termination cards. While these cards are rather mild in their approach, the possibilities are limitless. The assignment calls for students to produce a termination card and bring it to class. An actual card should be made. Each student is then allowed 2-3 minutes to show their card and explain the theoretical proposition their card represents.

SOURCES

- Albert, Stuart and S. Kessler. 1978. "Ending Social Encounters." *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 14: 541-553.
- Altman, I., and D.A. Taylor. 1973. *Social Penetration: The Development of Interpersonal Relationships*. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, & Winston.
- Anderson, S.A. 1988. "Parental Stress and Coping During the Leaving Home Transition." *Family Relations*, 37: 160-164.

- Baxter, L.A. 1979. "Self-Disclosure as a Relationship Disengagement Strategy: An Exploratory Investigation." *Human Communication Research*, 5: 215-222.
- Baxter, L.A. 1982. "Strategies for Ending Relationships: Two Studies." *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 46: 223-241.
- Baxter, L.A. 1983. "Relationship Disengagement: An Examination of the Reversal Hypothesis." *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 47: 85-98.
- Baxter, L.A. 1984. "Trajectories of Relationship Disengagement." *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 1: 29-48.
- Baxter, L.A. 1985. "Accomplishing Relationship Disengagement." *Understanding Personal Relationships*, 11: 243-265.
- Baxter, L.A. and J. Philpott. 1980. *Relationship Disengagement: A Process View*. Paper presented at the Speech Communication Association, New York City, NY.
- Baxter, L.A. and J. Philpott. 1982. "Attribution-Based Strategies for Initiating and Terminating Friendships." *Communication Quarterly*, 30: 217-224.
- Cody, M.J. 1982. "A Topology of Disengagement Strategies and an Examination of the Role Intimacy, Reactions to Inequity, and Relational Problems Play in Strategy Selection." *Communication Monographs*, 49: 148-170.
- Duck, S. 1982. "A Topography of Relationship Disengagement and Dissolution." In S. Duck and R. Gilmartin, eds., *Personal Relationships 4: Dissolving Personal Relationships*. New York: Academic.
- Fisher, H.E. 1987. "The Four-Year Itch." *Natural History*, 22-30.
- Jaffe, D.T. and R.M. Kanter. 1976. "Couple Strains in Communal Households: A Four-Factor Model of the Separation Process." *Journal of Social Issues*, 32: 169-190.
- Knapp, M.L. 1984. *Interpersonal Communication and Human Relationships*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Phillips, G., and J. Wood. 1983. "Ending Human Relationships: The Stages of Deterioration." *Communication and Human Relationships*, 180-206.

- Spanier, G.B. and L. Thompson. 1984. *Parting*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
- Ragan, S.L. and R. Hopper. 1984. "Ways to Leave Your Lover: A Conversational Analysis of Literature." *Communication Quarterly*, 32: 310-317.
- Rose, S. 1984. "How Friendships End: Patterns Among Young Adults." *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 1: 267-277.
- Rusbult, Caryl. 1983. "The Exit-Voice-Loyalty-Neglect Model." *Responses to Dissatisfaction in Close Relationships*, 209-237.
- Shapiro, B.Z. 1977. "Friends and Helpers When Ties Dissolve." *Small Group Behavior*, 8: 469-477.
- Stewart, J. 1977. *Bridges Not Walls*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Vaughan, D. 1986. *Uncoupling*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Teaching Ethics in the Basic Survey Speech Communication Course

William A. Haskins

The teaching of ethics in the speech communication curriculum is not a new phenomenon. However, emphasis upon the teaching of ethics in our profession appears to be growing (Arnett, in press). A new commission on ethics for the Speech Communication Association on research output (Johannesen 1975; Arnett, in press; Jenson 1985) points to its growing importance. This increased attention on ethics and communication is also true in our basic speech communication classes. This essay focuses on a general overview in the teaching of ethics, as related to major contexts of communication taught in most basic survey courses of speech communication.

We face a unique opportunity in our profession. We can teach our students to integrate not only knowledge of communication theories and perspectives but ethical choices that we, as well as our students, must consider and make within the different communication contexts (McCaleb and Dean 1987). Teaching students to think about such choices and demonstrating to them the processes in making our own ethical choices in speech communication can be a learning experience instructive to all class participants. This process needs to start early in the course, allowing the class a yardstick by which to judge ethical issues as they evolve. To begin this process, a general definition of ethics is required.

Definition of Ethics

No one universally accepted definition of ethics exists. Each of us has a "specialized meaning" of ethics which influences our personal behavior. This is not less true in a communication transaction. We act in part according to our "personalized" view of ethics. Yet, our "personalized" view is tempered by societal norms (rules of behavior) which influence our moral judgements. For example, we may have learned that it is wrong to tell a lie. So, a friend tells it "like it is" to someone who may be insulted or angered or both. The friend risks damaging the relationship because of the ethical choice made not to lie. He or she believes it more important to tell the truth — perhaps thinking that a relationship built upon trust and honesty is stronger than one built upon opposite factors. Our communication reveals the ethical choices that we make and act upon.

For the purposes of this essay, ethics is defined as *principles used for determining what is good and right*. These principles can originate from such areas as character, values and conduct.

An individual's character may contain constructs that connect ethics with our credibility (McCroskey and Young 1981). One's personal traits such as fairness, humanness, truthfulness or kindness can generate principles for making moral judgements concerning what actions (or means) are right and just to achieve a good (or end) within a context or across contexts. One may, for instance, perceive him or herself to be fairminded. Another may believe, as a general principle, it right to listen carefully to a proposal before making an enlightened (good) judgment. One's character, then, is intimately tied to our personal *ethos*.

Quintilian understood this important connection when he wrote, "Ethos, in all its forms, requires the speaker to be a man of good character and courtesy" (p. 427). Aristotle, likewise, discusses this topic in his teachings of rhetoric.

Values are the worth placed on something. For example, it may be important to place high value on telling the truth in relationships with others. The principle to draw from this

value is "that it's always right to tell the truth in a relationship." At times, however, values may be in conflict with each other. On one hand, an individual may place great importance on telling the truth, but may also place much worth and importance on maintaining polite and courteous relationships. Conceivably, these two values can clash with each other in an interpersonal context when faced with the choice of either telling the truth or attempting to maintain a courteous relationship that omits or shades the truth. Yet, an either/or dilemma may not be the only avenues for ethical choices. Other possibilities from other values or combination of values (e.g., telling the truth but doing so in a tactful manner) may exist pointing the way to ethical choices and action.

One's conduct can be used to deceive or tell lies (Ekman 1985). It can also provide areas for discovering principles used in determining what is good and right. For example, how we behave in an argumentative situation reveals basic principles for determining good and right. Does a person behave as a rapist (Brockriede 1972) allowing only for one goal to be achieved or only one version of the argument to be completely aired? Or, does a person behave as a lover who is willing to be open and honest and who encourages the other person to present his or her position as completely and persuasively as possible? One's behavior can help uncover truth through action about good and right in a communication context. Using this definition of ethics, a researcher can explore the way for integrating this topic with major contexts of communication that often appear in a basic communication course.

Ethics and Concepts of Communication

For a better understanding of the relationship between ethics and communication, it's helpful to examine such a relationship in the broader contexts of communication. This section explores four of the most basic contexts of communication. They involve intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, small group com-

munication and public communication. To help introduce these contexts in the basic course, this essay recommends using narration.

Intrapersonal Communication and Ethics

Marion sat by herself in the library. She thought about the three term papers due at the end of the semester. In high school, she like to put off projects until the very end. "But, this wasn't high school," she told herself. She knew that her old behavior habits for doing school work had to change. "No excuses can be made for delaying work on these papers," she thought. "I need to start now." Marion realized her challenge. She confronted herself by assessing her school habits. Her honest appraisal of them helped her realize what needed to be done if she was to accomplish her goal of completing the term papers on time. She thought to herself, "I'll start researching my first paper *this week*."

As with Marion, we, too, have conversations with ourselves. Intrapersonal communication such as, "Why did I put that answer on the test?" or "I shouldn't have said that to her" or "This time I'm going to tell him what I think" are but some of the types of statements that we may raise in private conversations with ourselves. But even in these conversations, everyone faces ethical issues.

In Marion's conversation, she had to confront certain ethical issues. Is she honestly assessing her behavior towards school work? Is she purposely omitting any relevant facts necessary for evaluating her situation? Or, is her commitment to start the research process a genuine commitment? Essentially, Marion is the only one in this situation who can answer these questions. For she is the *only* one communicating.

In exploring ethics in intrapersonal communication, we can ask students to explore the following questions.

- 1) Are we objectively examining the facts?
- 2) Are we rationalizing about our behavior?
- 3) Are we purposely omitting information, taking it out of context or attributing it to the wrong source?

For class discussion, students can provide examples, anecdotes or brief stories which illustrate their answers to the questions above. Together, instructor and students can explore some of the principles which affect private inner conversations. Are such principles increasing our ability to be more open and honest with ourselves? Are such principles helping us achieve what is good and right? Or, is the opposite occurring? Clearly, these are sensitive questions which must be treated delicately and skillfully. No student should be forced to contribute if they elect not to. But, when dialogues about the self occur in the classroom, the instructor needs to encourage self-assessment if self-improvement and ethical development are to occur.

Interpersonal Communication and Ethics

John and Pam have been married for nine years. They enjoy sharing all kinds of information with each other. They trust each other to be open and honest about their thoughts and feelings. They are sensitive to each other's feelings and right to privacy. Each can be counted on to not divulge confidential or sensitive matters, especially if asked not to do so.

John and Pam are engaged in an interpersonal communication setting. This is the type of communication which frequently occurs between two people. Their conversation is not unique. Everyone has probably found themselves in similar situations. Their conversation reveals a variety of ethical choices made to attain what they perceive as good and right. Choices concerning trust, openness and honesty are but some of the actions that they consider right and just for establishing a *good* interpersonal relationship.

Possible questions to raise concerning choices are:

- 1) Do we feel comfortable revealing details, perhaps some intimate, about ourself?
- 2) Do we trust the other person not to reveal confidential information?

- 3) Do we or the other person present information in a manner that does not distort its accuracy or the accuracy of the message?
- 4) Do we listen to each other for purposes of understanding?
- 5) Does each person allow the other person the possibility of reaching his or her respective goal?
- 6) Does a monologue or dialogue conversation mode dominate?

Case studies, examples from students, and personal examples can be used as topics for examining the ethical principles which can derive within this context. An additional source for uncovering ethical principles comes from work done by Makay and Brown (1972). They offer some helpful characteristics believed important in ethical communication. Their work can be used to assess the discussion of ethical choices made in an interpersonal communication context. These characteristics include:

1. human involvement from a felt need to communicate,
2. an atmosphere of openness, freedom, and responsibility,
3. dealing with the real issues and ideas relevant to the communication,
4. appreciation of individual differences and uniqueness,
5. acceptance of disagreement and conflict with the desire to resolve them,
6. effective feedback and use of feedback,
7. mutual respect and, hopefully, trust,
8. sincerity and honesty in attitudes toward communication,
9. a positive attitude for understanding and learning and,
10. a willingness to admit error and allow persuasion.

Their list is important because it recognizes the possibility and importance of conflict and persuasion in interpersonal dialogues (Arnett 1986). Such characteristics

can both build relationships and uncover what's good and right between people. Instructors can use these characteristics to reveal basic principles important for establishing ethical communication in the interpersonal communication context.

Group Communication and Ethics

The dreaded, annual departmental meeting was occurring. Members expected the worst and often found the worst to occur in these meetings. This meeting was no exception. Many of the members were ill-prepared to discuss the key issues. The group's leader was known for his lengthy monologues and his policy of favoritism — recognizing, supporting and rewarding those who agreed with him. Those who disagreed with him found themselves censored from the discussion or relegated to the worst assignments in the department. To circumvent the leader's authority, some members brought hidden agendas in order to accomplish their goals. The meeting turned into its usual shouting match with members accusing each other of deception and lack of commitment to the department's goals.

This group has some severe communication problems. Members distrust each other. Some fear voicing their opinions. Others feel that they must use hidden agendas to accomplish their goals. The leader seeks to encourage only those who agree or support him. The leader tends to use a monologic mode of communication with group members. Certain members lack the necessary motivation for adequately preparing themselves for the meetings. As a result, members accuse each other of lying, deception and laziness.

Using the above case study, the class can explore areas for ethical choices during group communication. Divided into groups, the class can consider the following questions.

- 1) Are hidden agendas inherently unethical? Why? Is it true in this case?

- 2) Is the leader's policy of favoritism necessarily harmful to the group's discovering truth in analyzing problems and discovering solutions? Why?
- 3) Is conflict in small group communication unethical? If so, when and why? Was it unethical in this case? Why?
- 4) How prepared should members be to participate effectively in small groups? Was the lack of preparation of members in this group harmful to their ethical conversation with each other? Why?

From this discussion, instructors can follow it up with a class exercise involving a problem to be resolved in groups. Once the problem is resolved, members ask themselves similar questions to those in the case study. What general assessment can they offer of their ethics and possible effects upon their small group communication. Much can be gained from a self-appraisal of the ethical choices made (or need to be made) in group communication.

Public Communication and Ethics

Paul presented his first speech in his public speaking class. He was nervous. But, he prepared long and hard for it. His message contained current facts, credible sources, and reasonable arguments. His language clearly expressed his ideas. He did not cloak them in terminology that few listeners would understand. He further tried to create a dialogue with his audience by adapting his message to their feedback. Paul's efforts paid off. His classmates rated his speech highly. Both he and his class learned from the experience. They realized that sound preparation, practice and audience-adaptation can enhance the effectiveness of a public message.

Paul's experience in presenting a public message is not atypical. His class seemed to respect and appreciate the effort he gave to it. They felt as though he spoke to them and not at them. They tended to view his speech as containing credible sources and evidence and sound arguments. They

rated Paul as a trustworthy speaker, who displayed good-will towards his audience.

Generally, public communication occurs before large audiences who may or may not be in the same proximity with each other. Audiences listening to a radio broadcast, viewing a television broadcast or reading a newspaper or magazine are some of the types of public audience who can be spread literally around the world.

As in the other modes of communication, senders of messages to public audiences face ethical concerns. The Federal Communication Commission, for instance, places restrictions on particular content (e.g., lying or making unsubstantiated claims in advertisement) contained in mass media communication. If sources violate these laws, they may suffer not only judicial penalties but loss of confidence and trust by the public.

From the case study or from other examples, we can explore important topics related to ethical choices that public communicators face. In determining some of the ethical principles that can emerge in this context, students should consider the following questions:

- 1) Does the communicator's competence affect his or her ethics? Why?
- 2) Is it important that a communicator appear trustworthy to an audience? Why?
- 3) Is it important that a communicator display goodwill towards an audience? Why?
- 4) Need a communicator be able to identify with an audience? Why?
- 5) Is a communicator's use and citation of sources important in determining if he or she acts ethically? Why?

Students' answers to these questions may reveal much about what they perceive as being ethical in a public communication context. If they are, for example, to present speeches later in the term, they can be reminded of what they considered good and right when acting ethically in a public communication context. Their knowledge, then, of this

context and the possible ethical choices existing in it can greatly shape the speech that they give.

Summary

As stated at the beginning of this essay, it is useful to introduce the section of ethics early during the course. It provides a yardstick by which students can judge ethical issues as they develop in each of the communication contexts studied. The end result of this, of course, is to have students question their own ethical choices made in these contexts.

The paper provides a general definition of ethics. Ethics is defined as the *principles used for determining what is good and right*. These principles originate from areas such as character, values or conduct. How these principles are used in communication classes help students assess ethics, behavior, and other people's behavior in various communication contexts.

As speech communication teachers, we can help students explore important ethical issues in each of the communication contexts by examining case studies or students' personal examples. There is always the danger that instructors may be perceived as imposing their own ethical system on the class. But, the risk is necessary when discussing the important relationship between ethics and communication.

The topic of ethics has a long tradition in the teaching of rhetoric. Speech teachers need not shy away from this important topic in the basic communication course. Instead, instructors should welcome the challenge to show students the connection of the speech communication field to daily communication behaviors.

References

- Aristotle. 1966. *The Rhetoric of Aristotle*. trans. L. Cooper. New York NY: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

- Arnett, R. 1986. *Communication and Community: Implications of Martin Buber's Dialogue*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Arnett, R. (in press). "The Status of Communication Ethics Scholarship in Speech Communication Journals from 1915 to 1985." *Central States Speech Communication Journal*.
- Brockriede, W. 1972. "Arguers as Lovers." *Philosophy and Rhetoric*, 5: 1-11.
- Ekman, P. 1985. *Telling Lies: Clues to Deceit in the Marketplace, Politics, and Marriage*. New York, NY: Norton.
- Jenson, J.V. 1985. "Teaching Ethics in Speech Communication." *Communication Education*, 34: 324-330.
- Johannesen, R.L. 1975. *Ethics in Human Communication*. Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill.
- Makay, J. and W.R. Brown. 1972. *The Rhetorical Dialogue*. Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown.
- McCroskey, J.C. and T.J. Young. 1982. "Ethos and Credibility: The Construct and its Measurement after Three Decades." *Central States Speech Journal*, 32: 24-34.
- Quintilian. 1966. *Institution Oratoria*, trans. H.E. Butler. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

The Necessity of Separating Idealized Accountability from Realized Accountability: A Case Study

Karen Greenberg

The creation and maintenance of collective and individual identities falter when these identities cease to be supported by institutional communication such as the communication of military organizations, political coalitions, religious sects, and educational systems. Institutional communication, in turn, fails when it is mystified, when it is difficult to distinguish between the communication's articulated and actualized practices. This essay examines the mystery of one type of institutional communication, the communication of an educational system. The system this essay addresses is the basic communication course, as represented by basic communication course instructors' manuals.

The blurred distinction between the basic communication course's alleged accountability to public and private role legitimization and its actual accountability is elucidated. The elucidation is provided in the context of the following assumptions: 1) that research is needed on institutional communication's mysteries, especially as this kind of mystery is made evident in educational systems; 2) that educational systems are elemental to the fulfillment of our public and private roles; 3) that the basic communication course is an important component of higher education; and 4) that basic communication course instructors' manuals constitute reasonable texts for learning about the course.

Presented at Speech Communication Association Convention, New Orleans, LA, November, 1988

The Context

Research on the mysteries of educational systems' communication fails to meet the accountability needs generated by this kind of system. This deficit is described in both formal and informal discourse. Consider the observation made by the Select Committee of the Association of American Colleges that "[o]ne of the most remarkable and scandalous aspects of American higher education is the absence of traditions, practices, and methods of institutional and social accountability."¹ Consider, too, the frequency with which instructors and students complain in their private lives about the failure of educational systems to meet their needs. In part, this deficit is constituted by misinformation about educational systems', instructors', and students' behaviors. The publics we participate in are often ill-informed about the finance and defense implications of educational policies, about the service and research implications of instructors' agendas, or about the career and health implications of students' courses of action. This deficit is also partially due to the interdisciplinary nature of research on institutional communication. Some social scientists consider work in this area to be too "ambitious" to engage in because it creates the need for additional self-examination, for new philosophical concepts, and for new responsibilities. Some humanists consider this type of work to be too "distasteful" to engage in because it *applies* philosophy to mundane issues. Moreover, people on both sides of the disciplinary divide consider this type of work to be too much of an aberration to engage in because it attempts to cross Postenlightenment disciplinary boundaries.

Research specifically on the instructional communication in higher education is desirable because post secondary education has received less scholarly attention than have secondary and elementary systems. There seems to be "an inability on the part of educators to synthesize an analysis of the components of good teaching in the college and university classrooms."²

In addition, only a portion of the available literature in higher education focuses on instructional communication. Most research on higher education is based on the situation model of human behavior,³ and does not assume "that behavior is a result, or even an active determinant, of forces that interact with each other."⁴ Also little of the existing interactional instructional communication research focuses on ethics.⁵ Scholars seem to disavow that instructors' communication has ethical dimensions, that acknowledging their awareness of these dimensions is vital to the heuristic value of a greater body of research, or that acknowledging this awareness is politic.⁶ Existent higher education research fails to transcend objective teleology.

Yet educational systems are worthy of study. This kind of system is vital to the realization of our public and private roles. A shortage of research on this kind of system means misunderstandings about educational systems' operation and consequences, and about our use of collectively legitimized manner of teaching and reinforcing critical thinking skills. Without these kind of skills, our world becomes one of increasingly reinforced "egocentric and sociocentric thought, conjoined with massive technical knowledge and power."⁷ The implications of this latter vision of society ought to be sufficient to prompt many studies of educational systems.

Given these needs, reserachers are well advised to commence by focusing on components of educational systems that are purportedly answerable to the system. The basic communication course is an example of this kind of component.⁸ This course presents itself as a forum for teaching students how to fuse ethics and politics into action,⁹ and as a means for providing students with basic literacy when they are easily accessible and relatively impressionable.¹⁰

In addition, the basic communication course is a fairly easily distinguishable entity in the higher education curriculum. This course is usually: conducted in multiple, small sections; is performance based; and is taught by junior faculty and graduate teaching assistants.¹¹ This course also has several prevalent, fairly easily identifiable content and

application orientations.¹² Other reasons why research is needed on the basic communication course include the dated nature of much of the existent literature,¹³ and the existent literature provides insufficient information about the ethical dimension of the course's instructional communication. There are many reasons to use the basic communication course as a starting point for research on instructional communication ethics.

Instructors' manuals make a good text for documenting accountability in the basic communication course. Although instructors' manuals have limited distribution, they contain "descriptions of the teaching method[s], criteria for determining when to use the[se] method[s], characteristics of the[se] method[s], steps in [their] effective implementation, and criteria for assessing the effectiveness of the[m]." ¹⁴ In addition, because these manuals are usually produced by a course's director, by a course's curriculum committee, or by some other representative(s) of a course's educational system, they can be indicative of a system's behavioral objectives.

Instructors' manuals are reasonable texts for studying the difference between articulated and actualized accountability in the basic communication course. Research on components of higher education, such as the basic communication course, is important to our understanding of institutional communication. An understanding of institutional communication is important to the creation and maintenance of our public and private roles. Therefore, this author conducted a study on the accountability disparity in the basic communication course.

The Study

This study aimed to elucidate the implicit accountability of basic communication course instructional communication, as this accountability was presented in the rhetoric of basic communication course instructors' manuals. This study revealed that notwithstanding the basic communication course's reputation for training students in

the skill of active citizenship, self-esteem and self-actualization, this course actually seems to teach students how to acquiesce to their instructors, how to be subservient to higher levels on the institutional ladder. This insight was made manifest through the use of rhetorical criticism.

Although rhetorical criticism that aims at illuminating communication's ethical dimension is not as prevalent as neo-Aristotelian, psychological or movement study criticism,¹⁵ ethical rhetoric as a type of investigation does have rationale, including: contemporary public address's concern with values and morals, rhetoricians' obligations to society and morality, intellectuals' duties to ethical theory and metatheory, and critics' call to behave like the "moral guardian[s] of civilization."¹⁶ This type of criticism does not work toward rewriting practical texts as philosophical ones, but toward producing a way to organize talk. It was the preferred method for this study because it provided a great amount of detail about communication patterns, while allowing for the development of reasoned judgment about them.¹⁷ Alternatively, a reductionist approach to institutional communication research would have failed to show the range of the phenomenon, would have tried to establish the phenomenon's norms, and would have neglected to account for ever present human nature. The latter kind of analysis might also disregard human destiny; "even though rhetoric may be amoral, people should not be."¹⁸

Having selected the method, the researcher moved through the stages of analysis, interpretation and evaluation. She solicited, received and sorted instructors' manuals from basic communication course directors whom had participated in the 1986 Basic Course Conference of the Central States Speech Association and the Eastern Communication Association. Of the seventy-seven directors contacted, forty-two (55%) responded. Of the forty-two that responded, twenty-eight sent instructors' manuals, three sent references to published manuals in lieu of sending actual documents, and eleven sent neither manuals nor references to manuals. Of the twenty-eight manuals received, twenty-five were in-house publications, and six

Regarding Students:

1. What are the instrumental, cognitive behaviors for the students?
2. How are these behaviors measured?
3. What are the instrumental, noncognitive behaviors for the students?
4. How are these behaviors measured?
5. Why should the students take this course?
6. How are the students supported in taking this course?

Regarding Instructors:

7. What are the instrumental, cognitive behaviors for the instructors?
8. How are these behaviors measured?
9. What are the behaviors measured?
10. How are these behaviors measured?
11. Why should the instructors teach this course?
12. How are the instructors supported in teaching this course?

Regarding Educational Systems:

13. What are the instrumental, cognitive behaviors for the system?
14. How are these behaviors measured?
15. What are the instrumental, noncognitive behaviors for the systems?
16. How are these behaviors measured?
17. Why should an educational system offer this course?
18. How are the educational systems supported in offering this course?

Figure 1. Analytical Questions

were professionally published manuals. Since the majority of the manuals received were in-house publications, this set of manuals was further examined. Of the twenty-five in-house manuals, fourteen were from teaching institutions, three were from community colleges, and eight were from research institutions.¹⁹ Since the majority of the in-house manuals were from teaching institutions, this set of manuals was used as the data base.

Each manual in the data base was reviewed carefully. The first time, each manual was read to provide the researcher with a sense of its author(s)' perspective on the basic communication course. Each manual was read to provide answers to questions about the educational system's, instructors', and students' instrumental cognitive and noncognitive behaviors (See Figure One for the questions and Appendix One for an example of their application).

A few points need to be clarified regarding these questions. The difference between accounting for "instrumental" and for "intrinsic" behaviors is the difference between accounting for means and for ends. The former is exemplified by etiquette and the latter is exemplified by the technical subject matter of "ethics." Both types of account making take place in instructional communication. When an instructor, on the one hand, explicitly endorses a behavior, such as honesty by lauding the quality of honesty in a speaker, he or she is engaging in instrumental account making. When an instructor, on the other hand, implicitly endorses a behavior, such as honesty by inference, by discussing the subject of plagiarism, he or she is engaging in intrinsic account making. Also "cognitive" behaviors involve "the acquisition and manipulation of factual information,"²⁰ whereas "noncognitive" behaviors involve all of the other ones, especially psychomotor and affective behaviors.²¹

The analysis part of the investigation enabled the researcher to sort the manuals. She sorted them according to the nature of basic communication course accountability that each one made manifest in response to the analytical questions. She found five types of purported accountability

in the instructors' manuals: accountability balanced among educational systems, instructors, and students; accountability belonging to instructors in deference to educational systems; accountability belonging to educational in deference to instructors; accountability belonging to educational systems. After the sorting was completed, the researcher randomly designated one manual per category of accountability to represent that category. She subjected the resulting set of five manuals to further study.

To interpret that data in the manuals, the researcher categorized each of the answers to each of the analytical questions. This categorization proceeded according to a model of "ethics" developed by the researcher. This categorization, too, was dependent upon the sophistication of the answers.

The conceptualization of ethics used in this study was constructed from insights on both the phenomenology of "ethics," and of the application of ethics to educational systems.

Although theories of the prescriptive and descriptive dimensions of ethics have existed for over a millennium, and although theories of the metaethical dimension of ethics have existed for over a century, these theories contain disparate accounts of ethics' phenomenology. In one view, ethics is defined as a branch of philosophy. "The traditional distinction . . . still considers as branches of philosophy the three [']normative['] sciences of logic, ethics, and aesthetics, concerned with standards, methods and tests of thinking, conduct, and art, respectively."²² In another view, "ethics" is differentiated from "morality." "Morality," or "moral philosophy," is "the business of having an action guide,"²³ whereas "ethics" is talking about that action guide. "Ordinarily the term [']morals['] refers to human behavior, while [']ethics['] denotes systematic, rational reflection upon that behavior. Morality is the practical activity, ethics the theoretical and reflective one."²⁴ In addition to these two views, many other views of ethics exist.

The student of ethics will nevertheless have to get used to a variety of terminologies; he will find plain "ethics" used for what we have just called "morals"

("normative ethics" is another term used for this); and he will find, for what we have just called "ethics," the more guarded terms "the logic of ethics," "metaethics," "theoretical ethics," "philosophical ethics."²⁵

In addition, most applied ethics literature covers contexts such as medicine and biochemical engineering, or focus on general ethics methodology rather than on the relationships among educational systems, instructors and students.

A reconceptualization of ethics was needed for this study. "Ethics" became understood as having prescriptive, descriptive and metatheoretical functions, and as having normative, axiological and aretaic foci.²⁶ The prescriptive function of ethics is used for "arriv[ing] at a set of acceptable judgments;"²⁷ the descriptive function of ethics is used for determining "sociological and psychological descriptions of normative ethical beliefs and language, explanations of why people use moral language in the way that they do and accounts of its origin,"²⁸ and the metatheoretical function of ethics is used for "work[ing] out a theory of meaning and justification."²⁹ Roughly, rhetoric which includes the spelling out of moral obligations, moral values or nonmoral values is prescriptive. Rhetoric about that rhetoric is metatheoretical,³⁰ and rhetoric about rhetors is descriptive. The prescriptive function of ethics can be further distinguished from the descriptive and metaphysical ones by its concern with the philosophical nature of or with universal occurrences of behaviors. The descriptive and metatheoretical functions of ethics, conversely, are concerned with the factual nature of or with particular (sets of) behaviors.

The normative focus of ethics is used for understanding the goodness or badness of behaviors; and the aretaic focus of ethics is used for understanding the "good-making characteristics or virtues and their opposites,"³¹ of behaviors. Normative rhetoric is concerned with stases, axiological rhetoric is concerned with values, and aretaic rhetoric is concerned with virtues. In short, "prescriptive" language cues are designated by "language used most obviously in commanding, but also in exhorting, advising, guiding, and, even commending;"³² "descriptive" language

cues are designated by language used most obviously in informing about the qualities of an individual or object;³³ "metatheoretical" language cues are designated by language used most obviously in introspection and in linguistic analysis; "normative" language cues are designated by language used most obviously in "choosing, preferring, approving, commending, and grading;"³⁴ and "aretaic" language cues are designated by "excellence of any kind, but from the beginning [they were] also associated with the idea of fulfillment of function."³⁵

These types of language cues were juxtaposed to construct a map of ethics. This map has nine categories; prescriptive normative, descriptive normative, meta-theoretical normative, prescriptive axiological, descriptive axiological, metatheoretical axiological, prescriptive aretaic, descriptive aretaic, and metatheoretical aretaic rhetoric (See Figure Two). The data about students', instructors', and educational systems' behaviors in each manual in the data base, as provided by the answers to the

	NORMATIVE	AXIOLOGICAL	ARETAIC	
PRESCRIPTIVE DESCRIPTIVE METATHEORETICAL	Prescriptive Normative (A)	Prescriptive Axiological (D)	Prescriptive Aretaic (G)	nommic necessity (laws)
	Descriptive Normative (B)	Descriptive Axiological (E)	Descriptive Aretaic (H)	causal necessity (rules)
	Normative Meta.theory (C)	Axiological Metatheory (F)	Aretaic Metatheory (I)	logical necessity (theories)
	affordances prohibition obligation (stases)	goodness badness (values)	moral excellence moral non-excellence (virtues)	

Figure 2. Ethics's Functions and Foci

analytical questions, were sorted into these categories (See Appendix Two for an example).

Once the researcher was able to determine what kinds of functions and foci were attributed to the behavior espoused in the instructors' manuals, she assessed whom among the students, instructors, and educational systems were accountable for legislating, judging, and executing each of these behaviors. To determine this accountability, she pinpointed the subject(s) and object(s) of each behavior. For example, in the statement "an absence is defined as failure to attend 50 minutes of class," an educational system was determined to be accountable for legislating the behavior, since it defined the nature of lateness; instructors were determined to be accountable for judging whether or not the behavior was fulfilled, since instructors took attendance; and students were determined to be accountable for executing the behavior, since students were responsible for coming to class on time.

Several patterns of accountability emerged from this assessment; "balanced" accountability, "shared" accountability, and singular accountability. If the legislation, judgment and execution of a behavior was divided among all three of the parties, the accountability was considered "balanced." If the legislation and judgment, the legislation and execution, or the judgment and execution, was the responsibility of another party, the accountability was considered "shared." If the legislation, judgment and execution of a behavior was the responsibility of only one of the three parties, that party was considered to have "singular" accountability.

After the researcher determined whom was accountable for each of the behaviors, she tallied the emerging patterns of accountability. She literally counted the instances of each type of accountability for each of the instructors' manuals in the data base. Theoretically, accountability types could have included: the singular accountability of educational systems to instructors, of educational systems to students, of instructors to educational systems, of instructors to students, of students to educational systems, and of students to instructors; the shared accountability of educational

systems and instructors to students, of instructors and students to educational systems, and of students and educational systems to instructors; and the balanced accountability of educational systems, instructors and students to each other. That is, each manual could have exemplified one of ten different types of accountability. Recall, too, that the manuals purported to show one of five different types of accountability; balanced among educational systems, instructors, and students, belonging to instructors in deference to educational systems, belonging to educational systems in deference to instructors; belonging to educational systems in deference to students; or belonging to students in deference to educational systems. In actuality, the tallies showed that the realized types of accountability in the basic communication course are only one of three different types; instructors in deference to educational systems, students in deference to educational systems, and balanced accountability.

Limitations

It is hoped that this study succeeds in creating an awareness of some of the prevalent fads and folk wisdoms about the accountability of the basic communication course, and that it provides a conceptualization of ethics that is useful for rhetorical criticism, in general. However, it is recognized that the power of this study is limited by the researcher's choice of methodology, of data collection and selection, and of application of criticism.

One limitation of this study's methodology choices was that only rhetorical criticism was used. Interactional analysis, relational analysis, network analysis, participant observation, and content analysis all are observational methods that are equally viable for this kind of research. Likewise, historical or experimental designs could also be fruitful.³⁶ Another limitation of the methodology is that hermeneutic studies, in general, neglect to explain: the surrounding conditions of their foci, the "*pattern of*

unintended consequences of actions" of their foci, structural conflicts within the societies of their foci, and historical changes affecting their foci.³⁷ This study did not, for instance, provide information about how basic communication course manuals are presented to basic communication course instructors, or information on how these manuals are used after they have been presented.³⁸

Data collection choices also limited this study. By deciding to use instructors' manuals as the texts, the investigator was limited to rhetoric generated by educational systems for instructors. Other possible data collections include: texts from instructors to educational systems, texts from instructors to students, texts from students to instructors, texts from students to educational systems, or texts from instructors to instructors. Another limitation of the choice of data collection was the researcher's dependency upon basic communication course directors for the data. Although the response rate to the information request was high, it was not unanimous. The substance of the data base constrained the results of this study, too. Although the basic communication course at teaching institutions was examined, other research foci could have been employed. This study could have used: texts from other kinds of institutions (e.g. research-oriented ones), texts in other forms (e.g. published manuals, or department reports), texts from other periods, or texts on other critical components of the higher education curriculum.

Further, the manuals critiqued were dissimilar in form. Although the manuals tended to have more or less universal content and authority, they tended to have different structural and temporal boundaries. Some manuals consisted of a handful of pages stapled together, or lacked total contiguity and consisted of a series of memos or other departmental documents, whereas other manuals were large, professionally bound and printed volumes. In addition, whereas some manuals were reedited or rewritten every year, others were merely redistributed annually.

Like methodology and data choices, criticism choices, too created limitations for this study. Although it is hoped that the clarity of the conceptualizations, the specificity of

the research objectives and the training and practice of the researcher yielded sound results³⁹ for the analysis, any employment of question asking "adds unreliabilities, particularly when the volume of writing is large."⁴⁰ Further, the analytical questions that were applied to each instructors' manual in the data base were representational rather than definitive. The researcher did not consider her set of questions to be exclusive in nature, nor pertinent to all of the manuals. Information was found in some of the manuals, in fact, that was relevant to the study, but not directly responsive to the selected method of analysis.

The interpretation stage of the study also had inherent limitations. The lack of a universal conceptualization of ethics was the chief problem of this stage of the research. As William Lillie noted in *An Introduction to Ethics*, "[i]t is notorious that one can use a chisel as a screw-driver, with disastrous results to the chisel."⁴¹

The evaluation stage of the study also limited the potency of the study's findings. Subjectivity on the part of the researcher and a true lack of similar studies with which to compare findings impaired the reliability of the researcher's judgment on whom among students, instructors, and educational systems were actually accountable for legislating, judging, and executing each of the behaviors framed in each of the answers to the analytical questions.

These limitations of the study's methodology, data and criticism choices are but a few of the many fathomable ones. It is hoped that reference to them acknowledges the boundaries of this work and reaffirms its value.

Discussion

The purported picture of the basic communication course's accountability moved from the highest levels of the educational system's hierarchy to the lowest ones, whereas in actuality, accountability moved from the lowest levels of the social hierarchy to the highest ones (See Figure Three). In addition, in the ideal picture, students are usually presented

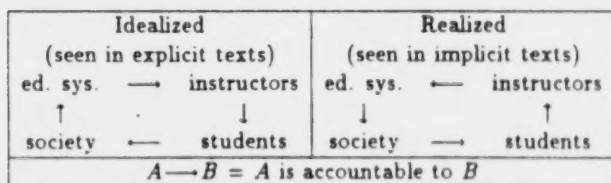


Figure 3. Idealized and Realized Accountability
in Instructors' Manuals Course

as accountable for executing behaviors, instructors are usually presented as accountable for judging behaviors, and instructors, in concert with educational systems, are usually presented as accountable for legislating behaviors. In the real picture of the texts, though, educational systems are usually presented as both the legislators and judges of behaviors, and students and instructors are usually presented as the behaviors' executors.

One implication of these findings is that although we believe that the basic communication course is a vehicle by which "new citizens" are taught how to critically and creatively respond to institutional communication, the course is in fact a vehicle for conditioning both students and teachers to acquiesce to institutional systems. This discrepancy is worrisome because the basic communication course has been regaled as a valuable means of enlightening the masses and moreso *because this discrepancy is hidden*.

Many of us have believed, for instance, that higher education's moral system is one that looks to the public's motivation to attain "*justice*" and to the "*public good*" as a unifying way of conceptualizing ethics.⁴² This assumption is reasonable because of the influence of the Enlightenment on American higher education. The Enlightenment implored citizens to take active roles in the decisions of the state. American higher education did emphasize citizens' civic duties. American higher education historically: "had private denomination sponsorship, with a modest admixture of

stage supervision . . . had no connection with professional and advance faculties . . . [and was] a system in which the major decisions were made by a board of governors who were not teachers . . ."⁴³

Yet, the rhetoric in the instructors' manuals was not rooted in this tradition. The Enlightenment tradition places civic decisions above individual ones and is symbolized by collective accounts of right and wrong. Many metatheoretical statements would have had to be present in the instructors' manuals to demonstrate this type of morality. Few metatheoretical statements, though, were acutally present. In the cases in which the rhetoric did indicate that the distribution of accountability was balanced, very few metatheorized values and norms were given. Alternatively, in the cases in which the students were presented as accountable, no singular focus of ethics seemed to be premier, and when the instructors were presented as accountable, few metatheorized virtues, and to a lesser extent, few metatheorized values were given. There were no cases in which the educational systems were presented as accountable. The educational systems do not seem to want instructors to question or to lead questioning about institutional conventions. Instructors were limited to prescribing stases, values, and virtues. The educational systems seem to want students to mimic, but not to challenge institutional ethics, and to know how to execute, but not to know how to legislate or to judge a variety of behaviors. In contrast, the Enlightenment tradition of morality implores individuals to create and maintain the state.

Another belief many of us have held about higher education's moral system is that it is based on a view that looks to "each person[s] unique core of feeling and intuition" for a unifying way to conceptualize accountability.⁴⁴ American higher education's evolution was influenced by the *Lehrfreiheit* and *Lernfreiheit* of the nineteenth century German universities. Hence this assumption about the moral order undergerding American higher education, too, is reasonable. The German universities' version of expressive individualism advocated:

the paucity of administrative rules within the teaching situation[, as exemplified by] the absence of a prescribed syllabus, the freedom from tutorial duties, [and] the opportunity to lecture on any subject according to the teacher's interest. Thus, academic freedom, as the Germans defined it, was not simply the right of professors to speak without fear or favor, but the atmosphere of consent that surrounded the whole process of research and instruction.⁴⁵

Indeed American higher education elevated instructors' roles to some of these heights.

Yet, the rhetoric in the instructors' manuals did not mirror the rhetoric of *Lehrfreiheit* and *Lernfreiheit*, since the former was mostly transindividualistic and the latter was not. Substantial amounts of clearly distinguishable ethical statements on instrumental, noncognitive behaviors would have had to be present in the instructors' manuals to indicate this type of moral system. In contrast, the manuals' rhetoric mixed language cues about the ethics of instrumental, cognitive behaviors with language cues about the ethics of instrumental, noncognitive behaviors. The rhetoric also obscured distinctions among normative, axiological and aretaic cues and made axiological cues most accessible in cases in which these cues were aesthetic rather than ethical in nature. The educational systems seem to want obligations to be masked in actions "good for" or "good of" students and instructors instead of "good for" or "good of" educational systems, and seem to back this stance with the authority of tradition.

Alternatively, we may have suspected that the rhetoric in the manuals could have represented a moral system that looks to individuals' effort to maximize their self-interest in response to the given ends of basic human appetites and fears.⁴⁶ This assumption, too, would be credible, during the course of the development of American higher education "wealth and a talent for business had once been considered virtues in trustees, [and eventually] they were thought to be prerequisites."⁴⁷ Yet, the rhetoric of the instructors' manuals did not reflect this tradition, either. A majority of the manuals' language cues about instrumental, cognitive

behaviors, were entangled in language cues about instrumental, noncognitive behaviors. This verbal morphosis is contrary to the rhetoric of an utilitarian individualistic moral system.

Finally, some of us believed that American higher education's moral system is rooted in a tradition that looks to "[c]hurch, sect, mystical or individualistic forms ..." of theistic voluntarism for unifying ways to conceptualize ethics.⁴⁸ This belief, too, is plausible because American colleges began as and were influenced by religious institutions rather than sectarian ones.⁴⁹ Harvard University, this country's first institution of liberal thinking, was "founded in a community . . . dedicated to the enforcement of religious unity."⁵⁰ Interestingly, the instructors' manuals' rhetoric did seem to be backed by this tradition. Many of the statements in the manuals showed students and instructors seeking external validity for their roles, specifically from educational systems.

Our lack of awareness of the discrepancy between the articulated and actualized moral systems supporting the basic communication course is more worrisome than is the contradictory nature of the actualized moral system to popular social constructionist myth. This lack of awareness on the part of instructors and individuals empowers "a social order that, while it elicits [people's] reverence, does not represent [people's] true nature,"⁵¹ and places us in "a double repressions [sic] in terms of those it excludes from the process and in terms of the model and the standard (the bars) it imposes on those receiving this knowledge."⁵² We must communicate the existence of this mystery and work to alter its ends. Otherwise, our basic communication course will continue to contribute to the legacy of institutional *communication that inhibits rather than enables* the creation and maintenance of collective and individual identities.

Appendix One: An Example of One Manual's Answers to the Analytical Questions

Regarding Students

What are the instrumental, cognitive behaviors for students? The purposes of this course were given as: developing an awareness of, providing an understanding of the theory and principles of, and providing an opportunity to apply, the basic concepts of communication in today's society. These purposes were met by speeches, papers and written examinations.

How are these behaviors measured? Several measurements were specified. For example, requirements for an "A" grade were given as: offering insightful contributions; providing substantive thought and critical analysis; having well organized, developed and amplified speeches recognizing and expressing counterpoints to views expressed; having mechanically correct communication; developing information-thorough research; demonstrating superior understanding of important concepts; turning in papers on the designated dates; creatively developing material; and demonstrating the interrelationship of information. The students were also expected to complete any additional assignments not specified in the grade criteria. A variety of forms for students' and instructors' preparation of assignments and evaluations were contained in this manual, too, including model outlines for informative and persuasive speeches, a general speech evaluation form, and an outline evaluation form.

What are the instrumental, noncognitive behaviors for students? Successful students needed to: have adequate attendance, be prepared to speak on assigned days, and meet all basic requirements on assigned days.

How are these behaviors measured? These behaviors were measured by written or oral evaluations from the listeners; by instructor's assessments, including instructors' make-up policies; and by student-instructor

conferences. Interestingly, nothing was said in this manual about role taking.

Why should students take this course? Rationale provided in this manual included: applying principles of oral communication to specific needs, engaging in social activity, developing communication understandings and behaviors, and enhancing career and community life.

How are students enabled to take this course? This category pertains to prerequisites, and so forth. None were given in this manual. However, possible answers could include: passing one or two writing courses, or passing a fundamental oral skills competency exam.

Regarding Instructors

What are the instrumental, cognitive behaviors for instructors? The stated, cognitive objectives included manifesting the ability to: lead discussions, manage problems, have office hours, and give examinations.

How are these behaviors measured? In this manual, this information was not made explicit. In other manuals this category included items such as meetings, peer evaluations, supervisor evaluations, and journals.

What are the instrumental, noncognitive behaviors for instructors? This type of behavior included: personalizing teaching, personalizing evaluative comments, giving encouragement to students, and providing students with continuous and long term exposure to a particular system of appraisal. Additional noncognitive behaviors included: respecting students as learners, developing rapport, and developing and using feedback. Civility and teaching experience were among still other instrumental, noncognitive behaviors in other manuals.

How are these behaviors measured? Self-appraisal was the implied measurement. After each of the noncognitive behaviors listed, methods by which these behaviors could be achieved were given. For instance, under the behavior of maintaining a warm and accepting classroom atmosphere, this manual urged that;

The more positive the student's [sic] perception of their teacher's feelings toward them, the more positive their self-image, the better their achievement, and the more desirable their classroom behavior. In addition, teachers who like pupils tend to have pupils who accept and like each other.

Why should instructors teach this course? This manual claimed that instructors "have been choosing and developing their own teaching techniques through the years." Other reasons, given in other manuals, included required service, tenure, and money.

How are instructors enabled to teach this course? Although nothing was specified in this manual, other manuals answered with "experience," "rank," or "seniority."

Regarding the Educational System

What are the instrumental, cognitive behaviors for the educational system? Here, too, nothing was explicitly stated. In some of the other manuals, though, the answers included personal and social responsibilities.

How are these behaviors measured? Here, too, nothing was explicitly stated. Some manuals responded that schoolwide or departmentwide committees, or supervising instructors, such as department heads, measured these behaviors.

What are the instrumental, noncognitive behaviors for the educational system? Among the qualities listed were: enforcing academic honesty, providing a worthwhile educational experience, and providing subjects for research in speech communication.

How are these behaviors measured? This information was not stated. Other manuals' answers included administrative audits and course evaluation forms.

Why should the educational system offer this course? No explicit answers to this question were given in this manual. Other manuals' answers included public

concern with communication competencies and administrative foresight.

How is the educational system enabled to offer this course? Likewise, this question was not answered. Other manuals' answers included a special course budget, legislative requirements and curricula committees' requests.

Appendix Two: Examples of Categorization of the Manual's Rhetoric: The Interpretation Stage of the Critique

An example of a *prescriptive normative* statement is; "all requirements must be completed in order to pass this course." This statement is prescriptive because it specifies a judgment, completing requirements. This statement is also normative because it specifies that students need to complete all requirements.

An example of a *descriptive normative* statement is; "the grading system and the value given to each assignment will be determined by the individual instructor." This statement is descriptive because it specifies a judgment of a subclass, instructors. This statement is also normative because it specifies that instructors' need to determine grading systems and the value given to each assignment.

An example of a *normative metatheoretical* statement is "you have been choosing and developing your own teaching techniques through the years." This statement is metatheoretical because it specifies a particular theory of judgment. This statement is normative because it specified an application of that theory to the need to choose and develop teaching techniques.

An example of a *prescriptive axiological* statement is; "it is important that the University policies . . . be followed." This statement is prescriptive because it specifies a value, the importance of university policies. This statement is also

axiological because it specifies that a particular educational system's instructors value the importance of these policies.

An example of a *descriptive axiological* statement is; "a good speech should have a beginning, a middle, and a conclusion." This statement is descriptive because it specifies a value of a particular subclass, basic communication course directors. This statement is also axiological because it specifies that directors value speeches containing a beginning, a middle, and an end.

An example of an *axiological metatheoretical* statement is; "because critical thinking is important, an ethics unit is included." This statement is metatheoretical because it specifies a particular theory of value, critical thinking. This statement is also axiological because it specifies an application of that theory to the value of including a unit on ethics.

An example of a *prescriptive aretaic* statement is; "oral communication is, by nature, a social activity." This statement is prescriptive because it specifies a virtue, social activity. This statement is also aretaic because it specifies that people consider engaging in oral communication virtuous.

An example of a *descriptive aretaic* statement is; "purposeful oral communication . . . [is] necessary in your career and community life." This statement is descriptive because it specifies a virtue of a particular subclass, instructors. This statement is also aretaic because it specifies that instructors consider communicating purposefully virtuous.

An example of an *aretaic metatheoretical* statement is; "you have the opportunity in this class to develop communication understandings and behaviors which are usually associated with articulate, literate and purposeful oral communication." This statement is metatheoretical because it specifies a particular theory of virtue, utility. This statement is also aretaic because it specifies an application of that theory to the virtue of developing communication understandings and behaviors.

References

1. The Select Committee. 1985 *Integrity in the College Curriculum: A Report to the Academic Community*, The Findings and Recommendations of the Project on Redefining the Meaning and Purpose of Baccalaureate Degrees, 33 Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges.
2. Thomas H. Buxton and Keith W. Prichard. 1975. "Introduction," Eds. Thomas H. Buxton and Keith W. Prichard, *Excellence in University Teaching: New Essays* (6-7). Columbia, SC.
3. Gavriel Solomon. 1985. *Communication and Education: Social and Psychological Interactions* (17-18). Beverly Hills: SAGE.
4. Gavriel Solomon, *Communication and Education*, 18.
5. This deficit is a separate issue. Karen Greenberg. May May 1985. "Questioning the Lack of Accounting for the Power of Pedagogical Discourse." ms. Amherst: U of Massachusetts.
6. There seem to be very few texts that specify and justify the prescriptive, normative dimension of instructional communication. Karen Greenberg. 1979. "Questioning the Lack of Accounting for the Power of Pedagogical discourse" (7-8); and Lansing Lamont, *Campus Shock: A Firsthand Report on College Life Today* (104-105). New York: E.P. Dutton.
7. Richard W. Paul. Sept. 1984. "Critical Thinking: Fundamental to Education for a Free Society," *Educational Leadership* 14.
8. James W. Gibson, Michael S. Hanna, and Bill M. Hudson. 1985. "The Basic Speech Course at U.S. Colleges and Universities: IV," *Communication Education* 34: 290.
9. Consider such classic views of rhetoric as Aristotle's belief that rhetoric is an off-shoot of ethical studies, and Cicero's notion of "the good man speaking well."

10. Don M. Boileau. 1985. "Development and Directions for the Basic Course: ERIC Report," *Communication Education* 34: 74; Elaine P. Maimon, et al. 1981. *Writing in the Arts and Sciences* (71). Cambridge, MA: Winthrop; and the National Commission on Excellence in Education. 1983. *A Nation at Risk: the Imperative for Educational Reform*, a Report to the Nation and the Secretary of Education. Washington: United States Dept. of Education.
11. James W. Gibson, Michael S. Hanna, and Bill M. Huddleston, "The Basic Speech Course at U.S. Colleges and Universities: IV," 282, 284 and 289.
12. The orientations include: public speaking, combined contexts, communication theory, interpersonal communication, and small group communication. The instructional applications include various ratios of performance to theory. James W. Gibson, Michael S. Hanna, and Bill M. Huddleston, "The Basic Speech Course at U.S. Colleges and Universities: IV," 283 and 285.
13. Much of the existent basic communication course research took place during the 1930's, the 1940's and the 1970's. Ronald J. Matlon. 1980. *Index to Journals in Communication Studies Through 1979*. Speech Communication Association Convention. Annandale, VA.
14. Ann Q. Staton-Spicer and Jody L. Nyquist. 1979. "Improving the Teaching Effectiveness of Graduate Teaching Assistants," *Communication Education* 28: 203.
15. Ed Black. 1978. "The Practice of Rhetorical Criticism," *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (10-35, esp. 19 and 37). Madison: Wisconsin: UP.
16. Anthony Hillbruner. 1975. "The Moral Imperative of Criticism," *The Southern Speech Communication Journal* 10: 236-237.
17. James R. Andrews. 1983. *The Practice of Rhetorical Criticism* (58 and 60). New York: Macmillan.

18. Henry N. Wieman and Otis M. Walter. 1967. "Toward an Analysis of Ethics for Rhetoric," *Ethics and Persuasion: Selected Readings*, Richard L. Johannesen, Ed. (131). New York: Random House.
19. This taxonomy was partially based on information from Arthur Levine. 1978. *Handbook on Undergraduate Curriculum, A Report for the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education*. Washington: Jossey Bass. xvii,ff. and partially on information from Don Boileau, Director of Educational Services, Speech Communication Association, Personal interview, Jan. 15, 1987.
20. Walter D. Pierce and Michael A. Lorber. 1979. *Objectives and Methods for Secondary Teaching* (39). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
21. Walter D. Pierce and Michael A. Lorber, *Objectives and Methods for Secondary Teaching*, 39.
22. John Herman Randall, Jr. and Justus Buchler. 1942. *Philosophy: An Introduction* (358). New York: Barnes & Noble.
23. William K. Frankena. 1973. *Ethics*, 2nd ed. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2. cf. Eds. M. Rosenthal and P. Yudin, Trans. Richard D. Dixon and Murad Saifulin. 1967. "Ethics," *A Dictionary of Philosophy* (149) Moscow: Progress.
24. Larry R. Churchill. 1982. "The Teaching of Ethics and Moral Values in Teaching: Some Contemporary Confusions," *Journal of Higher Education* 53.3: 297.
25. J.O. Urmson, Ed. 1960. "Ethics," *The Concise Encyclopedia of Western Philosophy and Philosophers* (136). New York: Hawthorn.
26. This taxonomy is partially based on the work of Fred Feldman. 1978. *Introductory Ethics*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall; and Fred Feldman. July 1986. Personal interview.
27. William K. Frankena. *Ethics*, 11.

28. Kai Nielsen. 1967. "Problems of Ethics," Paul Edwards, Editor-in-Chief, *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* Vol. 3. (118) New York: Macmillan.
29. William K. Frankena, *Ethics*, 11.
30. James Mark Balwin, Ed. 1960. "Ethical Theories," *Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology*, Vol. 1 (346). Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith.
31. Fred Feldman, *Introductory Ethics*, 234; William K. Frankena and John T. Granrose, Eds. 1974. *Introductory Readings in Ethics* (295). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall; and William K. Frankena, *Ethics*, 79.
32. William Lillie. 1948. *An Introduction to Ethics* (321). New York: Barnes & Noble.
33. William Lillie, *An Introduction to Ethics*, 324-25.
34. William Lillie, *An Introduction to Ethics*, 315.
35. G.B. Kerfred. "Arete", *Agathon, Kakon*," Paul Edwards, Editor-in-Chief, *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Vol. 1. (147-148). New York: Macmillan.
36. R.B. Rubin, A.M. Rubin, and L.J. Piele. 1986. *Communication Research: Strategies and Sources* (55-76). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
37. Brian Fay. 1975. *Social Theory and Political Practice*, Series Eds. T.B. Bottomore and M.J. Mulkay, *Controversies in Sociology*: 1 (83-88). Boston: George Allen.
38. An instructors' manual presented as "gospel" in a formal orientation session is likely to be utilized differently than one mailed to and unaccompanied by explanation for, incoming or inexperienced instructors. In addition, some manuals might be used on an ongoing basis to answer instructors' questions, others might be discarded, as bureaucratic clutter, soon after they are received.
39. Earl Babbie. 1983. *The Practice of Social Research*, 3rd ed. (117). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

40. Klaus Krippendorff. 1980. *Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology*, the SAGE COMMTEXT Series: 5 (80). Beverly Hills: SAGE.
41. William Lillie, *An Introduction to Ethics*, 315.
42. This and subsequent conceptions of moral systems are based on Robert N. Bellah, et al. 1985. *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (27-51 and 335). Los Angeles: California UP.
43. Richard Hofstadter. 1955. *Academic Freedom in the Age of the College* (114). New York: Columbia UP.
44. Robert N. Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart*, 334.
45. Walter P. Metzger. 1955. *Academic Freedom in the Age of the University* (93-95 and 113). New York: Columbia UP.
46. Robert N. Bellah, et al., *Habits of the Heart*, 336.
47. Walter P. Metzger, *Academic Freedom in the Age of the University*, 141.
48. Robert N. Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart*, 333.
49. Walter P. Metzger, *Academic Freedom in the Age of the University*, 19; and Richard Hofstadter, *Academic Freedom in the Age of the College*, 76.
50. Richard Hofstadter, *Academic Freedom in the Age of the College*, 81.
51. Kenneth Burke. 1962. *A Rhetoric of Motives* (122). Los Angeles: California UP.
52. Michel Foucault. 1977. *Language, Countermemory, and Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, Ed. Donald F. Bouchard, Trans. Donald F. Bouchard and Sherry Simon (219). Ithaca: Cornell UP.

Implications of Student and Instructor Involvement in the Basic Course

Sam Wallace

Don B. Morlan

Educators and researchers in communication have been keenly interested in the discovery of methods for improving the quality of teaching and learning in their courses. Recently, attention has been paid to certain predispositions or personality traits of students and how they affect performance in the basic course. For example, communication apprehension and its effects on students in the basic course has been studied (see, for example McCroskey 1981). Also, based on studies and speculation by Rogers and Shoemaker (1971), McCroskey and Wheelless (1976), and Kozma, Belle, and Williams (1979), it has been hypothesized that when learning styles of students and instructors are matched, more and better learning should take place (see Seiler 1986). However, Phelps and Smilowitz (1986) and Morlan and Wallace (1986) have presented evidence which suggests that the learning style of students has little relationship to performance or evaluation in class, but that styles of the instructor seem to affect student evaluations. Even so, there is reason to believe that there are some personality characteristics of students and instructors which affect students' performances in the basic communication course. One such personality characteristic could well be communication competence. The purpose of this study is to examine the notion that students with high levels of communication competence will perform better in class and subsequently be more satisfied with the basic course than their counterparts with low levels of competence.

Competence and Communication Behavior

McCroskey (1982) and others have traced concern about competence as far back as Aristotle's *Rhetoric*. While no particular theory has ever emerged as *the* explanation, and there has been no universal definition of communication competence (see McCroskey 1982; Spitzberg 1983), many scholars appear to endorse a view of competence consistent with the following definition offered by Wiemann (1977):

... the ability of an interactant to choose among available communicative behaviors in order that he may successfully accomplish his own interpersonal goals during an encounter while maintaining the face and line of his fellow interactants within the constraints of the situation (198).

Taking this definition as representative, it is clear that there is a close connection between competence and successful communication. Indeed, the parallel between Wiemann's definition of communication competence and Aristotle's definition of rhetoric is obvious.

There appear to be at least two major points of similarity between current views of competence and successful communication. It is true that scholars treat communication behavior as goal oriented (see Cegala 1984a). It is also true that most scholars view communication competence as goal oriented. Second, rhetorical and communication scholars have historically emphasized the need to adapt to one's audience. Even discussions of coercive rhetoric point out the transactional nature of the persuasion process (Burgess 1972). As evident in Wiemann's (1977) definition, competence is also concerned with audience adaptation. In particular, it is expressed in terms of Goffman's (1967) work on the concept of face and the rules of social order that guides one's conduct in interpersonal society. There appears to be considerable overlap between views of communication competence and successful communication. Also, there is a mutual concern for how traits contribute to individual differences with respect to competence and related communication behavior. The concept of trait and communication competence is briefly examined below.

Among the topics of controversy in the interpersonal communication literature is how best to view competence (see Spitzberg & Hecht 1984; Wiemann & Backlund 1980). Some researchers emphasize competence as a trait of individuals, while others treat competence as a situationally determined phenomenon. Most likely, both approaches are correct. Cegala (1984b) suggests that competence is likely a function of dispositional tendencies of individuals, situational parameters such as norms and rules, and unique interaction among individuals. However, given the present state of research in communication, it is difficult to examine all of these components simultaneously. Even so, some researchers are attempting to investigate selected communication traits in various situations to determine the role of these traits in human communication. One research program has focused on the trait of interaction involvement. Following is a brief description of interaction involvement and its relationship to communication behavior.

The Concept of Interaction Involvement

Interaction involvement is a construct that has been developed and investigated by Cegala and others (Cegala 1981, 1984b; Cegala, Savage, Brunner, & Conrad 1982). Fundamentally, it is the extent to which individuals participate in communication (see Cegala 1981). When high in involvement, individuals typically integrate their feelings, thoughts, and conscious attention with the ongoing interaction. "Their consciousness is directed toward the evolving reality of self, other, and topic of conversation" (Cegala, et al. 1982, 229). Conversely, low-involved individuals are characteristically not so "tuned in" to social interactions. They are removed psychologically and communicatively from the ongoing interaction.

The Interaction Involvement Scale (IIS) is an operational definition of the construct (Cegala 1981; Cegala, et al. 1982). The IIS is a self-report questionnaire consisting of eighteen items which cluster into three related factors. The first factor, "responsiveness," is an index of an individual's

certainty about how to act in certain social situations. The second factor, "perceptiveness," is a person's sensitivity to (1) what meanings ought to be applied to other's behavior, and (2) what meanings ought to be applied to one's own behavior. The third factor, "attentiveness," is the extent to which one is cognizant of and alert to the cues in the immediate social environment, especially one's interlocutor.

The research undertaken in an effort to establish the construct validity of the IIS has, to date, gone in three directions. First, a substantial amount of work has been done relating interaction involvement to other trait-like measures (see Cegala, et al. 1982a). Second, cognitive and affective responses to two communication situations have been examined (see Cegala 1984b). Finally, effort has been made to discover the overt behavioral manifestations of interaction involvement (Cegala 1981; Cegala, et al. 1982; Redmon, Eifert, & Gordon 1983; Villaume 1984; Wallace 1985; Wallace & Skill 1986, 1987).

Interaction Involvement and Successful Communication

It can be seen that successful, goal oriented communication involves three related activities: formulation of goals, analysis of situation, and formulation of appropriate strategies. In order to explicate the relationship between successful communication and interaction involvement, it is necessary to examine these activities from the interaction involvement perspective.

The goal, directs the communicative effort and the behavior of the communicator is based on it. Cegala (1984b) suggests that high-involved people should have a clearer sense of their own as well as others' goals during interaction. As a result, they are more highly motivated to engage in communication than low-involved persons.

The second activity, the analysis of situation, includes gathering information about the audience, the situation, and other goal-relevant items. This notion has been taught in the basic course for decades. In either situation, possession of

this goal relevant information involves a constant reassessment of the other or audience such that the communicator would be able to make the appropriate adjustments in strategy to compensate for unanticipated responses. Whatever the setting, gathering this information, means being both attentive and perceptive. By definition, low-involved individuals are low in attentiveness and perceptiveness and will not be as successful at gathering goal-relevant information as high-involved individuals.

The final activity is the formulation of appropriate strategies to be used in the communication effort. This is a collection of behaviors that may be employed at any time by the communicator as a response to the requirements of the situation (based on information gathered during the analysis of situation). The low-involved individual would be lacking in several areas in this case. First, low involvement has been negatively correlated to behavioral flexibility (Cegala, et al. 1982), so even if the low-involved individual was "in tune" with the situation, available behavioral alternative would be limited. Second, choosing an appropriate behavior to exhibit is based on the communicator's analysis of the situation. Since the low-involved person is less likely to make an accurate assessment of the situation, the appropriate behavioral choice is less likely to be made. The low-involved person is often, therefore, "unsure how to respond." Responsiveness is defined as the ability to react to one's social circumstance and adapt (with some appropriate behavior). Since low-involved individuals are low in responsiveness, they should be less successful at achieving goals in public or interpersonal communication.

In summary, the more attentive, perceptive, and responsive individuals are, the more likely they are to be able to interpret accurately the behavior of the audience or interaction partner, formulate effective strategies for goal attainment, and successfully exhibit the appropriate behaviors to achieve desired goals. Since one goal of students is usually to get a good grade in the class, the high-involved student should be able to use the related talents to perform well in most basic courses. One result should be more positive

evaluations of the student by the instructor. Since the high-involved individuals are more attentive, perceptive, and responsive than low-involved individuals, it appears that the high-involved should be better students, receiving higher grades and getting more satisfaction from the class activities than low-involved students. Specifically, the following hypotheses have been formulated:

- H1: Students who are high-involved will receive higher grades than students who are low involved.
- H2: Students who are high-involved will evaluate the course and instructor more positively than students who are low-involved.

It is also suggested in this study that the level of involvement of the instructor should affect the instructor's performance in the classroom. An instructor who is high in perceptiveness, responsiveness, and attentiveness should be good at assessing student needs and exhibiting the appropriate behavior to adapt to the situation. As such, the following hypotheses are formulated:

- H3: Instructors who are high-involved will receive more positive evaluations of self and course than instructors who are low-involved.
- H4: Instructors who are high-involved will receive higher ratings on the dimensions of credibility than instructors who are low-involved.

Method

Subjects

Subjects were students and instructors in a multiple section, basic speech course at a medium sized midwestern university. The course had twenty-six sections ($n = 655$) and all students were asked to participate. Because it is required by the University for all graduates as a basic skill, students are attracted to the course from a wide variety of majors.

Subjects were defined as high-involved if all three of their factor scores on the Interaction Involvement Scale (IIS)

were +.5 standard deviations above the mean. Similarly, subjects were defined as low-involved if all three of their factor scores on the IIS were -.5 standard deviations below the mean.

Procedures

The data gathering was divided into three phases. Phase 1 involved the entire population (including instructors) of the twenty-six sections completing the Interaction Involvement Scale (Cegala 1981). Phase 1 was completed during the sixth week of the term.

Phase 2 involved the entire population of the course completing McCroskey's (1966) credibility scale and answering various questions evaluating the course. This phase of data gathering took place during the final week of the term. Because of absences on the day of the second round of data gathering and failures to correctly complete both questionnaires, the final number of subjects was significantly reduced ($n = 413$).

The final phase involved the acquisition of final grades for the course.

Dependent Variables

As directed by the hypotheses, three dependent variables were operationalized for this study: student grade, student course evaluation, and student rating of instructor credibility.

Student grades were obtained from the instructors at the end of the semester. Grades were reported on the traditional four-point scale (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1, F=0).

Student rating of instructor credibility was operationally defined as scores on McCroskey's (1966) scales for the measurement of ethos.

Student evaluation of the course and instructor was operationally defined as the answers to forty selected questions from standard student evaluation of teaching

forms. Responses were measured on a five-point scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree."

Responses were subjected to principal components analysis in an effort to reduce the data to a more manageable form. Minimum eigenvalue acceptable was 1.0. The analysis indicated a five factor solution. The factors were: teaching competence; value of course content; teaching style; relational aspects of instructor; and textbook. A complete description of the factors can be found in Figure 1.

There were two questions in the student evaluation that are not contained in the five factors. The final two items in the evaluation portion of the questionnaire were:

- #1. Everything considered, how would you rate this course?
- #2. Everything considered, how would you rate this instructor?

Respondents used a Likert-type scale for these items: 5 = excellent, 4 = above average, 3 = average, 2 = below average, 1 = poor.

Results

The first hypothesis predicts that students who are high-involved will receive higher grades. Results indicate no support for H1 ($F = 0.458$; $df = 1/110$; $p = .50$).

The second hypothesis predicts that students who are high-involved will evaluate the course and instructor more positively than students who are low-involved. Evaluations were broken down into five components. The results indicate no significant differences for any of the five components. As such, H2 was not supported.

The final two items on the evaluation questionnaire were: #1 "All things considered, how would you rate this course?" and #2 "All things considered, how would you rate this instructor?" Results indicate no significant differences in rating for item #1 ($F = 0.72$; $df = 1/110$; $p = .38$), or item #2 ($F = 1.06$; $df = 1/110$; $p = .30$).

The first component was "teaching competence." The following are representative questions that make up this component:

- The instructor was well prepared for class.
- The instructor communicated the subject matter well.
- The instructor's explanations were clear and concise.
- The course was well coordinated and well organized.

The second component identified by the analysis was "value of course content." The following questions are representative of this component:

- I learned a great deal from this instructor.
- Course helped develop my creative capacity.
- Course was useful for me.
- Course was adequate in meeting my personal goals.

The third component identified by the analysis was "teaching style." The following questions are representative of this component:

- Instructor was boring.
- Instructor put material across in an interesting way.
- Instructor held class attention.
- Instructor stimulated interest in the course.

The fourth component was "relational aspects of instructor." The following questions represent this component:

- Instructor is one of the best teachers I have ever known.
- I would be pleased to have another course with this instructor.
- Instructor was willing to help students having difficulty.
- Instructor respected students as persons.

The final component was "textbook." The following questions represent this component:

- Reading the textbook was useful.
- Assigned reading was interesting and of high quality.

Figure 1. Description of Evaluation Factors

Hypothesis 3 predicted that instructors who are high-involved will receive more positive evaluations of self and course than instructors who are low involved. Results indicate partial support for this hypothesis. For analysis, the evaluations were divided into the same five components mentioned before. The results for each component will be discussed separately below.

Results indicate that differences for the first component, "teaching competence," were not quite significant ($F = 3.83$; $df = 1/116$; $p = .053$). Results also indicate no significant differences in rating for the second component, "value of course content" ($F = 0.20$; $df = 1/116$; $p = .65$).

Results indicate a significant difference in rating for the third component, "teaching style" ($F = 8.26$; $df = 1/116$; $p = .005$). Cell means are reported in Table 1. Examination of cell means reveals that high-involved instructors were rated significantly higher on teaching style than low-involved instructors.

There was also a significant difference in rating for the fourth component, "relational aspects of instructor" ($F = 11.57$; $df = 1/116$; $p = .001$). Cell means indicate that the textbook was rated higher for low-involved instructors than high-involved instructors.

Table 1
Cell Means for Student Evaluation of Instructor
by Instructor Involvement

Evaluation Component	Involvement Level of Instructor	
	High	Low
#3	18.54	16.43
#4	23.51	18.98
#5	10.33	12.87
Item #2	3.96	3.43

With regard to the two final items (i.e., single ratings for course and instructor), one significant difference was found. There was no difference in rating for item #1 (rating of course) ($F = 0.02$; $df = 1/116$; $p .87$). There was, however, a significant difference in rating on item #2, rating of instructor ($F = 9.92$; $df = 1/116$; $p .003$). Cell means are reported below. Examination of cell means reveals that high-involved instructors were rated higher on item #2 than low-involved instructors.

In summary, high-involved instructors were rated higher in teaching style, relational aspects, and the overall evaluation than low-involved instructors. Low-involved instructors were rated higher in student evaluation of the textbook than high-involved instructors.

Hypothesis 4 predicted that high-involved will be rated higher on dimensions of credibility than low-involved instructors. The results for each dimension will be discussed separately below.

Three dimensions of credibility used for this study, competence, dynamism, and composure, produced no significant differences. There were, however, significant differences found on two dimensions. The first is character ($F = 11.65$; $df = 1/116$; $p .001$). Cell means are reported in Table 2 below. Examination of cell means indicates that high-involved instructors were rated higher in the character

Table 2
Instructor Ratings on Credibility Dimensions
by Instructor Involvement

Dimension of Credibility	Instructor Involvement Level	
	High	Low
Character	29.49	26.74
Sociability	30.57	26.26

dimension than low-involved instructors. The second significant difference was found in the sociability dimension ($F = 23.62$; $df = 1/116$; $p < .000$). Cell means reveal that high-involved instructors were rated higher on the sociability dimension than low-involved instructors.

In summary, there were no significant differences found on three dimensions of credibility. However, there were significant differences found on two: character and sociability. In both cases, high-involved instructors were rated higher than low-involved instructors.

Discussion

The original purpose of this study was to discover if different levels of communication competence resulted in differences in the performances of students and instructors in the basic course in communication. The results of this analysis suggest that the level of interaction involvement of students has little influence on how the instructor evaluates their performance or how the student evaluates the instructor. However, the results indicate that the level of interaction involvement of the instructor has a significant effect on student evaluations of instructors.

There are many possible explanations for the lack of effects when examining the involvement level of students. While there is some reason to expect high-involved students to out-perform low-involved students based on an ability to adapt to situations, having the ability is not the same as using the ability. It could be that these high-involved students just didn't make the effort to respond appropriately. A possible explanation for this is peer pressure. The high-involved student is "tuned in" to the student social situation in the class. If that social situation has norms that inhibit some students from out-performing others, then that pressure to conform is responsible for a somewhat homogeneous response from all students in the class. The peer pressure could be more powerful than the desire to achieve high grades. The high-involved student should be very aware of this kind of situation.

Regarding involvement levels of instructors, those who were high-involved were rated higher than those low-involved in teaching style, relational aspects, overall evaluation of instructor, and on the character and sociability dimensions of credibility. These could all be considered affective categories. As such, the results suggest that students liked and were satisfied with the high-involved instructor more than the low-involved instructors.

Since high-involvement implies a strong ability to adapt to social situations, it could be that students were better able to relate to the high-involved instructors because they were better able to relate to the students. This high level of affect between student and instructor would serve as a motivator for higher student satisfaction and improved student performance. The affect level of the instructor could influence the social norms of the class and, in effect, raise the performance standards, making it "OK" to do a good job in class. This study supplies some evidence to support this notion. It was found that high-involved instructors gave significantly higher grades than low-involved instructors ($F = 24.62$; $df = 1/116$; $p < .000$; 17.6% variance; cell means: $H = 3.47$, $L = 2.83$). Of course, it could be that the high-involved instructors gave better grades because they are "nice guys" or because they are engaged in strategies to maintain or save the "face" of students.

Low-involved instructors received higher ratings for the textbook evaluation category. It is not hard to imagine that, if a student wanted to perform well in a course but the instructor was difficult to approach for help (in or outside of class), the student could rely on the textbook for information. If the instructor were very open and/or approachable, perhaps the students would not need the textbook quite so much. One implication of this finding is that low-involved instructors had better choose quality textbooks and supporting materials as part of the course.

The results of this study support past research (see Morlan & Wallace 1986; Phelps & Smilowitz 1986) which suggests that teaching, cognitive, or personal styles of instructors do influence student performance and satisfaction with courses. This notion seems to be especially

important in a performance oriented class such as the basic course in communication. It appears that the high-involved instructors might be more desirable in this case to relax and motivate students.

If a goal of all who teach the basic course in communication is to continually improve it, then perhaps more research into style or personality characteristics of both students and instructors is needed. If the right teaching/learning strategies can be discovered for instructors and students, the basic course will become a more useful experience for all involved.

References

- Burgess, P. 1972. "Crisis Rhetoric: Coercion vs. Force." *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 59: 61-73.
- Cegala, D.J. 1981. "Interaction Involvement: A Cognitive Dimension of Communication Competence." *Communication Education* 30: 109-121.
- Cegala, D.J. 1984a. *Persuasive Communication*. Minneapolis: Burgess.
- Cegala, D.J. 1984b. "A Study of Affective and Cognitive Manifestations of Interaction Involvement During Unstructured and Competitive Interactions." *Communication Monographs* 51: 320-338.
- Cegala, D.J., G. Savage, C.C. Bruner, and A. Conrad. 1982. "An Elaboration of the Meaning of Interaction Involvement: Toward the Development of a Theoretical Concept." *Communication Monographs* 49: 229-248.
- Goffman, E. 1967. *Interaction Ritual: Essays in Face-to-Face Behavior*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Kozma, R. L. Belle, and G. Williams. 1979. *Instructional Techniques in Higher Education*. Englewood Cliffs: Educational Technology Publications.

- McCroskey, J. 1966. "Scales for Measurement of Ethos." *Speech Monographs* 33: 65-72.
- McCroskey, J. 1981. "Oral Communication Apprehension: Reconceptualization and a New Look at Measurement." Central States Speech Association Convention.
- McCroskey, J. 1982. "Communication Competence and Performance: A Research and Pedagogical Perspective." *Communication Education* 31: 1-7.
- McCroskey, J., and L. Wheelless. 1976. *Introduction to Human Communication*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Morlan, D.B., and S.P. Wallace. 1986. "Compatibility of Learning Styles in the Basic Course: A Move Toward Competence?" Speech Communication Association Convention. Chicago, IL.
- Phelps, L., and M. Smilowitz. 1986. "An Examination of the Correlation Among Learning Style, Social Style, and Student Learning in the Basic Communication Course." Speech Communication Association Convention. Chicago, IL.
- Redmon, K., C. Eiefert, and D. Gordon. 1983. "Interaction Involvement and Interviewing Skill." Unpublished paper, Department of Communication, Ohio State University.
- Rogers, E., and F. Shoemaker. 1971. *Communication of Innovations: A Cross Cultural Approach*. New York: The Free Press.
- Seiler, W. 1986. "Learning Styles and the Basic Course." Midwest Basic Course Director's Conference. Sioux Falls, South Dakota.
- Spitzberg, B.H. 1983. "Communication Competence as Knowledge, Skills, and Impression." *Communication Education* 32: 323-329.
- Spitzberg, B.H., and M.L. Hecht. 1984. "A Component Model of Relational Competence." *Human Communication Research* 10: 575-600.

- Villaume, W. A. 1985. *Patterns of Coherence in the Conversation of High and Low Involved Speakers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. Department of Communication, Ohio State University.
- Wallace, S.P. 1985. *An Examination of the Influence of Interaction Involvement on Outcome and Persuasion Strategy in Dyadic Negotiation Sessions*. Unpublished dissertation. Department of Communication, Ohio State University.
- Wallace, S.P., and T.D. Skill. April 1986. "Interaction Involvement/Communication Competence in the Negotiation Setting: Is More Better?" Central States Speech Association Convention. Cincinnati, Ohio.
- Wallace, S.P., and T.D. Skill. April 1987. "A Behavioral Analysis of Communication Competence in Negotiation." Central States Speech Association. St. Louis.
- Wiemann, J. 1977. "Explication and Test of a Model of Communication Competence." *Human Communication Research* 3: 195-213.
- Wiemann, J., and P. Backlund. 1980. "Current Theory and Research in Communicative Competence." *Review of Educational Research* 50: 185-199.

The Interaction of Teacher and Student Social Styles and Learning Styles on Learning Outcomes of the Basic Communication Course

Michael Smilowitz

Lynn A. Phelps

Much research has been done to determine ideal learning environments, and much of this research has focused on the role of teachers. There is good reason to expect teachers to have some considerable impact on learning outcomes. The results of a conference sponsored by the Office of Education's Bureau of Educational Personnel Development (Superintendent of Document 1971) concluded that "of all the factors that constitute a school, the single most influential in terms of pupil performance was the impact of the teacher."

There is little question that the interaction between teachers and students is important to learning outcomes (Stanford & Roark 1974). Instructional communication research has sought to identify the communication characteristics of teachers that affect the classroom (Hurt, Scott, & McCroskey 1978; Friedrich 1978; Bassett & Smythe 1979; Scott & Nussbaum 1981; Barker 1982; McCroskey, Richmond, Plax, & Kearney 1984). Some of the characteristics that have been examined include teachers' communication competence (Rubin 1982; Rubin & Feezel 1986), teachers' immediacy style (Andersen 1979; Kearney, Plax, Smith & Sorensen 1987; Kelly & Gorham 1988; Richmond, Gorham, & McCroskey 1987), use of self-

disclosure (Cooper 1988; Downs, Jividi, & Nussbaum 1988; Nussbaum, Comadena, & Holladay 1985), and humor (Civikly 1986; Gorham & Cristophel 1988).

Taken as a whole, this literature suggests that an instructor's communicative choices influence learning. What is not as clear is how these communicative choices impact different types of students. Is there an interaction between the social style of teacher and the social style of the learner? Is there a relationship between the social style of the teacher and the learning style of the student? The purpose of the paper is provide a preliminary examination of these questions. First, the variable of social style will be reviewed. Next, a review of the literature concerning learning style will be discussed and finally the two areas of social style and learning style will be related to the classroom environment.

Social Style

The two underlying dimensions of social style are *assertiveness* and *responsiveness*. Assertiveness refers to the perceived effort a person makes to influence the thoughts and actions of others. Responsiveness is the perceived effort a person makes to control or show their emotions when interacting with others. Based on these two dimensions, a 2x2 matrix is formed and individuals are classified into one of four social styles: analytical (lowly assertive and lowly responsive), amiable (lowly assertive and highly responsive), driver (highly assertive and lowly responsive) and expressive (highly assertive and highly responsive).

Sullivan (1977) found that people in business settings that were highly assertive were also perceived to be more powerful and more competent than lowly assertive persons. Snavely (1977) stated that highly assertive individuals were perceived to be more extroverted, more powerful, more trustworthy, more versatile, and more similar in terms of values than lowly assertive persons. Knutson and Lashbrook (1976) found that highly assertive individuals were less apprehensive than lowly assertive individuals. It

appears that assertive people are more attractive to others than nonassertive people.

Responsiveness is associated with a person's friendliness or emotional expressiveness. It is thought to be the relationship dimension since highly responsive individuals are labeled as warm, approachable, people-oriented, emotional, easy going, open, sociable, and dramatic. Lowly responsive individuals are viewed as cool, independent, aloof, objective, impersonal, and businesslike. Sullivan (1977) found responsiveness associated with sociability, versatility, trust, social attraction, character, composure, interpersonal satisfaction, task attraction and interpersonal solidarity. Snively (1977) further supported these conclusions when he found that highly responsive persons are perceived to be more versatile, sociable, extroverted, and trustworthy than lowly responsive persons. Finally, Knutson and Lashbrook (1976) postulated that highly responsive individuals were less apprehensive than lowly responsive individuals.

As indicated earlier, levels of perceived assertiveness and responsiveness are used to determine an individual's social style of analytical, amiables, expressive, or driver. A further description of the characteristics of each of the four styles provides a better understanding of the type of communication typically used by each of the four types. These styles include:

- 1) *Analyticals* are conceptualized to be technical specialists. They are characterized as industrious, persistent, serious, vigilant, orderly, uncommunicative, indecisive, stuffy, exacting, and impersonal. Since they are low in both assertiveness and responsiveness, they tend to make limited use of personal power and emotional expression.
- 2) *Amiables*, who are low in assertiveness but high in responsiveness, are thought to be supportive specialists. They are conceptualized as dependable, respectful, personable, conforming, retiring, non-committal, undisciplined, and emotional. While they

tend to hold their personal power in check, they freely express themselves emotionally.

- 3) *Expressives* are considered to be social specialists due to their high assertiveness and responsiveness. They also tend to freely express emotions and make use of their personal power. They are conceptualized to be personable, stimulating, enthusiastic, dramatic, inspiring, opinionated, promotional, undisciplined, and excitable.
- 4) *Drivers* are conceptualized as control specialists since they are highly assertive and lowly responsive. They tend to use their personal power, while controlling expression of their emotions. They are characterized as determined, thorough, decisive, efficient, pushy, tough-minded, dominating, and harsh.

Prisbell (1985) examined the relationship between interpersonal perception variables such as feeling good, safety, uncertainty level, and communication satisfaction and classroom learning and evaluations. He found that the preceding variables were significantly associated with affective learning, behavioral commitment, course evaluations and instructor evaluations.

A number of literature summaries have concluded that interpersonal attraction tends to be a significant predictor of leadership, interpersonal influence, and the amount and form of interpersonal communication in a relationship (Berscheid & Walster 1969). From studies in other but relevant areas it is expected that attraction would be a key variable in teaching effectiveness. Snavely (1978) found a significant relationship between task attraction and responsiveness among co-workers, suggesting that individuals would rather work on tasks with people who communicate affective responses (show emotions) than those who control their emotions. Parsley and Lashbrook (1976) also found a relationship between social attraction and responsiveness. Finally, Sullivan (1977) found that co-workers perceived amiables to be most socially attractive, followed by expressives and drivers with analyticals being the lowest in social attraction.

How is attraction related to learning the classroom environment? Is a teacher who is perceived as more attractive (task and/or social) by their students more effective in the classroom? Which of the four social styles will be perceived as the most attractive by students? Or is attraction an interaction between the teacher's social style and the social style of the student? Or is one social style the most attractive for classroom use?

Learning Style

Kolb (1976) defined learning style as the types of behaviors a person employs when confronted with an educational task and the attributes of the individual which interact with instructional circumstances in such a way as to produce differential learning achievement. Four parts of a person's learning style have been identified: 1) the manner in which one gathers information, 2) the manner in which one interprets information, 3) the manner in which one reasons to come to a decision or conclusion, and 4) the manner in which one interacts with others in a learning environment and the nature and quality of such interactions. Although there are a number of learning styles inventories, Kolb (1976) delineated four learning style scales: active experimentation, concrete experience, reflective observation, and abstract conceptualization. Based on a person's score on each of the four subscales, learning style classifies an individual as one of four types of learner:

- 1) *Converger* — Combines learning steps of abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. People with this learning style are best at finding practical uses for ideas and theories. If this is your preferred learning style, you have the ability to solve problems and make decisions based on finding solutions to questions or problems. You would rather deal with technical tasks and problems than with social and interpersonal issues. These learning skills are important to be effective in specialist and technology careers.

- 2) *Diverger* — Combines learning steps of concrete experience and reflective observation. People with this learning style are best at viewing concrete situations from many different points of view. Their approach to situations is to observe rather than take action. If this is your style, you may enjoy situations that call for generating a wide range of ideas, as in a brainstorming session. You probably have broad cultural interests and like to gather information. This imaginative ability and sensitivity to feelings is needed for effectiveness in the arts, entertainment and service careers.
- 3) *Assimilator* — Combines learning steps of abstract conceptualization and reflective observation. People with this learning style are best at understanding a wide range of information and putting it into concise, logical form. If this is your learning style, you probably are less focused on people and more interested in abstract ideas and concepts. Generally, people with this learning style find it more important that a theory have logical soundness than practical value. This learning style is important for effectiveness in information and science careers.
- 4) *Accommodator* — Combines learning steps of concrete experience and active experimentation. People with this learning style have the ability to learn primarily from "hand-on" experience. If this is your style, you probably enjoy carrying out plans and involving yourself in new and challenging experiences. Your tendency may be to act on "gut" feelings rather than on logical analysis. In solving problems, you may rely more heavily on people for information than on your own technical analysis. This learning style is important for effectiveness in action-oriented careers such as marketing or sales.

According to Reckinger (1979), not all students learn the same way or in the same manner. He stated that some students are oral learners, others kinesthetic learners, while others are independent learners. Students may or may not fit

the learning style the teacher selects to employ. Bates and Keirse (1975) estimate that 62% of the student population do not fit the traditional school learning pattern because they do not have traditional learning styles and personalities that match such a style. Bates and Keirse further claim that 38% of the students learn best through activity and that this group of students have the lowest correlation between academic ability and grade point average. They are also often the students that drop out of school.

Individuals who enter an educational system with one type of learning style probably begin to alter or adjust the learning style to meet the style used in the system. The type of system employed then becomes a major influence in determining their own teaching style should they eventually become a teacher. A liberal, less formal structured system will foster a different style than a traditional system.

Research Questions:

The literature provides some justification for anticipating both learning styles and social styles to influence student outcomes. In particular, it is expected that students of instructors with matching styles would both perform better as well as be more satisfied with the course procedures. However, there appear to be few empirical tests of the relationship.

Moreover, there is an alternative explanation that merits investigation. It may be that the actual correspondence of styles is less important than students' abilities to correctly identify their instructor's style. That is, students who are aware of their instructor's styles are able to adapt and respond to the particular course, and thereby perform better as well as feel more satisfied.

To determine whether it is the actual correspondence or accurate perception of the instructors' styles this study was designed to answer the following research questions:

- Q1: How does the actual match of instructor and student learning style influence student performance and student evaluation of course procedures?

- Q2: How does the student's identification of the instructor's learning style influence student performance and student evaluation of course procedures?
- Q3: How does the actual match of instructor and student social style influence student performance and the student evaluation of course procedures?
- Q4: How does the student's identification of the instructor's social style influence student performance and student evaluation of course procedures?

Method

Subjects

The subjects for the study were undergraduate students in basic speech communication courses at three midwestern universities. Fifteen sections, for an $n = 277$, completed the questionnaire during the last week of the term.

Survey Questionnaire

The fifteen instructors completed an instrument based on the Social Style Profile (Wilson Learning Corporation 1975). The study departed from the procedures recommended for the instrument, in that subjects only recorded their perceptions of their own social style. Instructors also completed the Learning Style Profile (Kolb 1976).

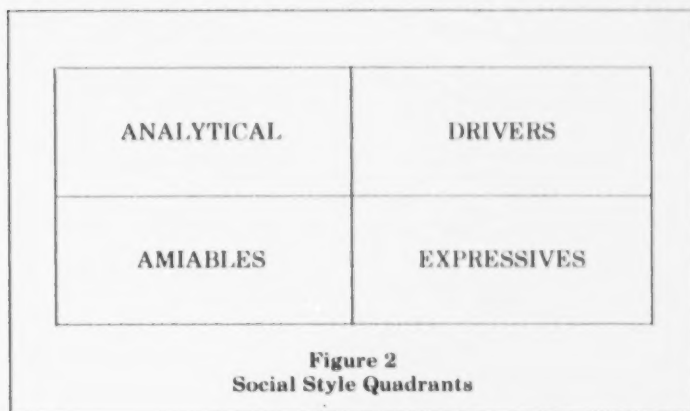
The students were given two sets of the same two instruments completed by the instructors. The first set asked them to identify their own social and learning style. The second set asked that they identify how they thought their instructors would answer the questions. In addition, the students completed a course evaluation form of sixteen items.

Predictor and Criterion Variables

The research questions required that a score be given to each subject for both the actual correspondence of learning and social styles as well as for the student's accuracy in identifying how their instructor's regarded their own styles. As both of the style instruments assume a 2X2 model (See Figures 1 & 2), the score was assigned based on the geometrical location of the instructor's were the same, the assigned value was 3. A value of 2 was given if the student's and instructor's style were in adjacent cells. A value of 1 was assigned if styles were in diagonally opposite cells. Four separate scores were thereby generated: (1) actual match of learning style; (2) actual match of social style; (3) accuracy of the student's judgment about the instructor's learning style; (4) accuracy of the student's judgment about the instructor's social style.

ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION	CONCRETE EXPERIENCE
ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALIZATION	REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION

Figure 1
Learning Style Quadrants



The research questions posed two criterion variables. Student performance was measured by final course grade. Evaluation of course procedures was measured by the sixteen item course evaluation measure.

Data Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was performed on all possible predictor variables and the two criterion measures of final course grade and student course evaluation. Subsequently, ONEWAY analyses were performed.

Results

Distribution of styles and grades

Table 1 presents summary descriptors of the sample. Most of the students reported their learning style to be active experimentation. As for social style, over half the students are classified as expressives. The average course grade received by the students was 2.878.

Table 1
Characteristics of Students

Learning Styles:	Percentage:
Concrete Experience	11.5%
Reflective Observation	11.5%
Abstract Conceptual	34.1%
Active Experimentation	42.8%
Social Styles:	Percentage:
Analytical	12.5%
Driver	12.1%
Expressive	52.8%
Amiables	22.6%
Course Grade:	Percentage:
A	28.8%
B	40.2%
C	22.9%
D	6.3%
F	1.8%
Mean = 2.878	
s.d. = .960	
Course Evaluation (Maximum = 80):	
Mean = 53.936	
s.d. = 14.978	

Pearson Correlations

Only two of the possible predictors of final course grade were significantly correlated (see Table 2). The student's own learning style and social style *were not* significantly related to course grade.

Table 2
Pearson Correlation Coefficients
for the Possible Predictors
of Student Course Grade
and Student Course Evaluation

Predictor Variable	Grade	Course Evaluation
Student Learning Style	-.0597 (n=200)	.1916* (n=271)
Student Social Style	-.0161 (n=172)	.1555* (n=255)
Match of Instructor and Student Actual Learning Style	-.1384* (n=172)	-.0919 (n=174)
Match of Student Perception of Instructor Learning Style	-.0437 (n=99)	.1655* (n=99)
Match of Instructor and Student Actual Social Style	.0101 (n=247)	.1714* (n=239)
Match of Student Perception of Instructor Social Style	.1688* (n=218)	.0017 (n=221)
*p < .05		

The actual match of instructor's and student's learning styles resulted in a statistically significant, although surprisingly, very slight *negative* correlation with course

grade ($r = -.1384$, $p < .05$). Less than 2% of the variance is accounted for by the r value. An ANOVA analysis of the means for exact match, adjacent, and diagonally opposite groups produced an insignificant F value, suggesting that the correlation is unrelated to course grade.

The student's accuracy in identifying the instructor's learning style also produced a significant correlation, and this time, in the expected direction ($r = .1688$, $p < .05$). Although the r value accounts for less than 3% of the variance, the ANOVA for the between group variances was significant ($F = 3.9496$, $p < .05$, $df = 2$). The means for the three groups increased in the predicted fashion (exact match, $X = 2.41$; adjacent match, $X = 2.02$; diagonal, $X = 2.00$).

Four of the possible predictors of the student's satisfaction with the course were statistically significant. The student's own learning style was significant ($r = .1916$), accounting for less than 4% of the variance. Active experimenters appear to be generally more satisfied with their courses, but the ANOVA analysis resulted in a non-significant F .

Student's social style was also significantly correlated with course evaluation ($r = .1555$), accounting for less than 2.5% of the variance. Amiables appear to be more generally satisfied, but the ANOVA analysis resulted in a non-significant F .

The actual match between instructor's learning and social styles each produced significant correlations with course evaluation ($r = .1655$ and $r = .1714$). The ANOVA for actual match of learning style was non-significant. The ANOVA for actual match of social style was, however, significant ($F = 4.5525$, $p < .05$, $df = 2$). Students with exact matches had the highest course evaluations, adjacent matches next highest, and diagonal opposites were least satisfied.

Oneway Analyses

Oneway analysis of variance was performed on the three predictors which had significant pearson correlations and

Table 3
Results of Oneway Analysis

GRADE Final course grade

EVAL Course evaluation

PERMATL Score for accuracy match of learning style

PERMATS Score for accuracy of match of social style

Source	D.F.	Sum of Squares	Mean Squares	F Ratio	F Prob.
Grade by PERMATS					
Between Groups	2	7.7407	3.8704	3.9496	.0207*
Within Groups	218	213.6258	.9799		
Total	220	221.3665			
EVAL by PERMATL					
Between Groups	2	163.3850	81.6925	1.5022	.2278
Within Groups	96	5220.6958	54.3822		
Total	98	5384.0808			
EVAL by ACTMATS					
Between Groups	2	1701.1383	850.5691	4.5525	.0115*
Within Groups	236	44093.5647	186.8371		
Total	238	45794.7029			

* $p < .05$

significant between group differences. Only two of the remaining predictors had significant F values (see Table 3). The student's ability in identifying the learning style of the instructor with course evaluation as the dependent measure, failed the oneway analysis. The student's accuracy in identifying the instructors' social style remained a significant predictor of course grade. The student's actual

match with the instructor's social style also remained a significant predictor of the student's course evaluation. The results of the Scheffe' multiple comparison procedure indicated that for both predictors there are significant differences in the means of the three groups: exact matches had the highest means, adjacent matches the next highest, and diagonal opposites the lowest means.

Discussion

The results of this study lend further support to claim that individuals with dispositions to certain styles can be expected to experience different outcomes than individuals with other types of styles. As for learning style, active experimenters appear to express more satisfaction with their courses. Not surprisingly, persons who regard their social style as amiable report greater satisfaction with courses. However, the data in this study indicate that the individual dispositions of students in basic speech communication courses influence only their course evaluation, and do not influence the grades earned by students.

In so far as the match between student and instructor style, the results of this study suggest that the actual match in learning style *as well as* the student's identification of the instructor's learning style are relatively unimportant to the grades earned by students or their satisfaction with the course. It may be that instructor's self-perceptions of their own learning style do not correspond with their own teaching style. Although the two might be expected to correspond with each other, it is important to realize that student's perceptions are probably based on the instructor's performance in class rather than on the learning processes instructors use. As learning style is a cognitive process, and teaching a communicative process, comparisons of learning styles may not be useful indicators of student outcomes.

Social style, in contrast, is a communicative factor, and therefore more likely to influence student behaviors. The results lend tentative support for this claim. As students are more accurate in identifying the social styles of their

instructors, they may be better able to respond to instructors, as well as have a better idea of what is expected. The relationship of the actual match of styles and course evaluation is not surprising. People prefer others who are like themselves, and therefore more likely to give positive attributions to similar others.

These results, nevertheless, must be regarded with some skepticism. One important reservation is that these results were derived exclusively from basic communication courses. The results might therefore be biased by the subject matter of the courses. Moreover, there were quite a few subjects who failed to complete correctly the entire survey booklet of 153 items. Finally, the grade point distribution was both relatively high and narrow, and therefore might have made it difficult for the analysis to determine significant sources of variation.

Conclusions

It would be naive, and probably wrong, to suggest that instructors ought to change their social styles. Naive, because individuals do not easily alter their social styles. Wrong, since this study provides no evidence that the social styles of the instructors were factors in predicting student outcomes. Effective teaching probably occurs through a variety of social styles.

The study does suggest, however, that student outcomes are influenced by student's abilities to accurately identify the social styles of their instructors. The implication is that instructors who wish to encourage better performance probably will find it useful to communicate information that students can use to identify the social style of the instructor. This is not to say that instructors should complete a social style inventory, and report the results at the first class meeting. Instead, it suggests a need for instructors to interact in class in ways beyond the presentation of course material. Indeed, the point is no more than the obvious: the better students know their instructors, the better they are likely to perform.

Certainly, further research is warranted. This study's failure to find significant relationships between instructor's and student's learning styles may be an artifact of the sample and the difficulties imposed by the survey questionnaire. For both learning and social style, it is necessary to research a wide variety of courses before recommending particular behaviors for all instructors. It is clear, though, that the communicative practices of instructors influence their students, and should therefore be more thoroughly understood.

References

- Andersen, J.F. 1979. "Teacher Immediacy as a Predictor of Teaching Effectiveness." In D. Nimmo, ed. *Communication Yearbooks 3* (pp. 543-559). New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books.
- Barker, L.L., ed. 1982. *Communication in the Classroom*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.
- Bassett, R.E., and M.J. Smythe. 1979. *Communication and Instruction*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Bates, M., and D. Keirse. 1976. *Please Understand Me*. Fullerton: California State University Press.
- Bennett, N. 1976. *Teaching Styles and Pupil Progress*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Berschied, E., and E.H. Walster. 1969. *Interpersonal Attraction*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Civikly, J.M. 1986. "Humor and the Enjoyment of College Teaching." J.M. Civikly, ed., *Communicating in College Classrooms*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Cooper, P.J. 1988. *Speech Communication for the Classroom Teacher*. Scottsdale, AZ: Gorsuch Scarisbrick.

- Downs, V., M. Jividi, and J. Nussbaum. 1988. "An Analysis of Teacher's Verbal Communication within College Classrooms: Use of Humor, Self-disclosure, and Narratives." *Communication Education* 37: 127-141.
- Friedrich, G.W. 1978. *Effect of Teacher Behavior on the Acquisition of Communication Competencies*. American Education Research Association Convention, Toronto.
- Gorham, J. and D. Cristophel. 1988. "The Relationship Between Verbal Teacher Immediacy Behavior and Student Learning." *Communication Education* 37: 40-53.
- Hurt, H.T., M.D. Scott, and J.C. McCroskey. 1978. *Communication in the Classroom*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Kearney, P., T.G. Plax, V.R. Smith, and G. Sorensen. 1988. "Effects of Teacher Immediacy and Strategy Type on College Student Resistance to On-task Demands." *Communication Education* 37: 54-67.
- Kelly, D.H., and J. Gorham. 1988. "Effects of Immediacy on Recall of Information." *Communication Education*, 37: 198-207.
- Knutson, P.K., and W.B. Lashbrook. 1976. "Communication Apprehension as an Antecedent to Social Style". Speech Communication Association Convention, San Francisco.
- Kolb, D.A. 1975. "Toward an Applied Theory of Experimental Learning." G. Cooper, ed., *Theories of Group Process*. New York: Wiley & Sons.
- McCroskey, J.C., V.P. Richmond, T.G. Plax, and P. Kearney. 1984. "Power in the Classroom V: Behavior Alternation Techniques, Communication Training, and Learning." Speech Communication Association Convention, Chicago.
- Nussbaum, J.F., M.E. Comadena, and S.J. Holladay. May 1985. "Verbal and Non-verbal Behavior of Highly Effective Teachers. International Communication Association Convention, Honolulu, HI.

- Parsley, M.L., and W.B. Lashbrook. 1976. "The Relationship Between Social Style, Interaction, and Interpersonal Attraction." Western Speech Communication Association Convention, San Francisco.
- Prisbell, M. 1985. "Interpersonal Perception Variables and Communication Satisfaction as Predictors of Classroom Learning and Evaluations." Speech Communication Association Convention, Denver.
- Rechinger, N. 1979. "Choice as a Way to Quality Learning." *Educational Leadership*, 255-256.
- Richmond, V.P., J.S. Gorham, and J.C. McCroskey. 1987. "The Relationship Between Selected Immediacy Behaviors and Cognitive Learning. M. McLaughlin, ed., *Communication Yearbook*, 10: 574-590. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Rubin, R.B., and J.D. Feezel. 1986. "Elements of Teach Communication Competence. *Communication Education* 35: 254-268.
- Rubin, R.B. 1982. "Assessing Speaking and Listening Competence at the College Level: The Communication Competency Assessment Instrument." *Communication Education*, 31:19-32.
- Scott, M.D., and J.F. Nussbaum. 1981. "Student Perceptions of Instructor Communication Behaviors and Their Relationship to Student Evaluations." *Communication Education*, 30: 44-53.
- Snively, W.B. 1977. *A Contextual Theory of Social Style in Primary Relationships: Exploratory Research*. Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.
- Stanford, G., and A.E. Roark. 1974. *Human Interaction in Education*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Sullivan, D.L. 1977. *Explorations in Stylistic Interpersonal Communication: A Conceptual Framework and an Empirical Strategy*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

Training or Teaching? A Professional Development Program for Graduate Teaching Assistants

Douglas M. Trank

A primary concern of all new and most experienced basic course directors is the teaching staff charged with delivering the course to students. There is frequently considerable turnover in the instructional staff for the basic course, especially in programs which use large numbers of temporary instructors or graduate teaching assistants. Who is going to teach the basic course? What are their qualifications? How are we going to help prepare them to teach this course? In a recent national survey of the basic course, "acquiring qualified staff" was identified as one of the major concerns of directors and administrators (Gibson, Hanna, and Huddleston 1985, 290). Virtually every conference and convention with programs related to the basic course has at least one session concerning the "training and supervision" of graduate teaching assistants.

Far too often, these programs present teaching assistants as individuals who come to us with few teaching skills, little knowledge about the discipline, and insufficient experience or ability to survive the classroom experience without specific day-by-day direction and close supervision. Basic course directors talk about how to "train" teaching assistants, how to ensure absolute conformity and uniformity across sections of the course, how to manage and supervise the basic course staff in various cost efficient configurations. Because the use of teaching assistants is so critical to the successful operation of a large number of

departments, the issues surrounding their preparation for teaching the basic course will continue to draw considerable attention.

In our continuing discussions concerning the preparation of basic course instructors, we should discourage the use of the terms "training" and "supervising" and replace them with "teaching" and "advising." While that may seem like a minor change, the ramifications and implications of accepting the new terms would result in rather dramatic alterations in the way we view the professional preparation for teaching in many basic course programs across the country. Among other things, it would require that we change our attitudes about the many roles graduate teaching assistants play in and for our departments.

Some academic disciplines may actually use their teaching assistants in ways which demand that they be trained and closely supervised. Interest in the preparation of graduate students as teaching assistants is certainly growing and many disciplines are looking to communication and composition programs for examples because of our relatively long history of concern for the classroom abilities of our teaching assistants. This interest is underscored by the attendance and response to the first National Conference on the Training and Employment of Teaching Assistants which was held in November 1986 at The Ohio State University (Chism & Warner 1987). The Second National Conference was held November 1989 at the University of Washington. Interestingly, this conference was planned and hosted by our colleagues in speech communication.

Few other academic disciplines have given their teaching assistants the degree of teaching and classroom freedom and responsibility that seems to be the norm in communication studies and composition, and many administrators from other disciplines are increasingly interested in how we "train and supervise" our graduate teaching assistants. Many of them may want to "train" their teaching assistants to conduct specific lab experiments or to lecture or to grade exams. Some feel the need to supervise all teaching assistants closely to ensure that they are following

the text exactly, giving all students the same information, and preparing all students to pass the same exams.

But "training" ought not be the issue when we talk about teaching courses which are critical and central to the liberal arts mission of colleges and universities. By defining our primary responsibilities as teaching and advising rather than training and supervising, we change the relationship between the full-time faculty and the teaching assistants. If we could confidently demonstrate that we knew exactly what should be taught, exactly when it should be taught, and precisely how it should be taught, we would obviously be more justified in requiring a lock-step, day-by-day syllabus and close supervision for teaching assistants. If we shared many central administrators' concern that all students in a particular course should be doing exactly the same assignment and reading exactly the same material at the same time, we could rationalize giving teaching assistants the same syllabus and demanding that they conform to its requirements.

Many of these typical approaches to working with new teaching assistants are, unfortunately, based more on the theory of control than on acceptable theories of teaching/learning. If all of our teaching assistants are doing the same thing in the classroom at the same time, we at least are projecting the image of being in control to ourselves, our teaching assistants, our administration, and our students. Although research in education is seldom conclusive, we do know that students are not equal — they learn at different rates, they have different experiences and abilities. Their different cognitive styles allow them to learn more efficiently with different teaching strategies, and they respond differently to varying kinds of feedback and evaluation. No two basic course sections are exactly the same. Some strategies work well with some classes and fail with others. Certainly no two teachers are the same or could create the same atmosphere with a particular class. Some teaching strategies, assignments, and approaches will work for some teachers and not for others. The personality, confidence, experience, and teaching style of the teacher must be considered in creating a plan for teaching any basic

communication course.

In order to do that, we need to "practice what we preach" in our discipline as we prepare to work with graduate instructors in the basic course. Specifically, we need to identify and give central consideration to the needs of our audience. In our pre-teaching workshops and weekly seminars, our audience is the group of graduate instructors we have hired to represent our department to students. In the classrooms across the campus where the basic course becomes a reality, the audience is composed of sometimes widely varying groups of students. While there is a justifiable need for comparable kinds of classroom experiences and perhaps a common core of content material for all students enrolled in the basic course, the mandatory use of the same syllabus and a lock-step training and supervising program are not necessarily the best means to that end.

The following guidelines for a program for teaching and advising graduate instructors reflect parts of our program at the University of Iowa. Although we are unique in that the "basic course" is a separate department answerable to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and integrates the teaching of speaking, writing, and critical reading, we are similar in many ways to other large basic course programs across the country. In several ways, it would be considerably easier to implement such an approach in basic course programs which are smaller or which concentrate on teaching only oral or written communication. Although we do not have a common syllabus, we do provide all teachers with a set of *Guidelines* which describe the philosophy and general goals of the course. They also describe general units of instruction, provide a variety of suggestions concerning assignments and approaches, and provide a range of the number and kinds of assignments which are expected. The Rhetoric Department includes 13 full-time faculty and approximately 130 graduate instructors who teach nearly 8,000 students each year. Most of the graduate instructors who teach Rhetoric come from the Departments of English, Communication Studies, or Education. We also hire graduate instructors from Theatre Arts, the Writers'

Workshop, Journalism, Law, History, and other departments.

Some of these teachers have had considerable and varied teaching experience while others have never been in front of the classroom. Only a very few have received instruction and feedback regarding the teaching/learning process or even seriously discussed teaching as a profession. Nearly all are selected as graduate instructors because of their academic qualifications, with little initial regard for their teaching ability, interest, or potential. In addition, their academic preparation may have very little to do with the teaching of writing, speech, or critical reading at the introductory level. Some faculty are only concerned with the academic potential of a graduate student applicant and seem to assume that teaching is something anyone can do, frequently with little advice, guidance, or instruction. What we do with them in our Professional Development Program, then, takes on added importance.

The Professional Development Program

Graduate instructors, like other humans, respond in a positive and professional manner when you treat them like colleagues rather than simply as cheap labor to teach the courses the rest of the faculty does not want to teach. It is even more revealing when some departments tell the graduate instructors they will be treated like colleagues and then refuse to allow them access to the power structure. They are not truly your teaching colleagues if few of the full-time faculty teach the basic course on a regular basis. They are not colleagues if they are denied access to important committees such as textbook selection, faculty recruitment, and other committees which make decisions which affect their classroom activities. They are not colleagues if they are denied the opportunity to be involved in policy decisions which affect their "training program" (which we call the Professional Development Program) and the courses they teach. They are not colleagues if the full-time faculty fails to take an active interest in their teaching as well as their academic progress.

Developing an Appropriate Atmosphere

The first step in establishing an effective teaching and advising program for graduate instructors, then, is to create an appropriate atmosphere within your department where they are truly accepted and valued as teaching colleagues. That requires active faculty support and participation. Appointing a single non-tenured assistant professor to run the basic course program while the rest of the faculty ignores it is a very powerful symbolic statement. The entire faculty ought to be involved in the creation and implementation of the program for the graduate instructors. They ought to teach at least a section of the basic course occasionally. They need to participate in some of the instructional meetings and be willingly available to talk to their graduate students about matters related to teaching the basic course as well as those related to graduate study.

The faculty must be willing to extend a professional level of collegial respect for the teaching efforts of the graduate students. The faculty must also agree on the goals of the teaching assistant program. The use of graduate instructors provides the department with relative inexpensive instruction per credit hour and allows the full-time faculty opportunities to teach something other than the basic course. These are positive benefits which too many faculty take for granted. A primary goal of any effective teaching assistant program must be to help both experienced and inexperienced teachers become more confident, competent, and effective in the classroom. Accepting this as a goal of your program requires that you do much more than simply train and supervise graduate students to perform the same tasks in different classrooms at approximately the same time each semester. Accepting this goal does not mean that you are sacrificing the goal of providing quality instruction to the undergraduate students in your basic course. It does mean that you are more willing to tolerate some diversity in the basic course and willing to allow your teaching assistants to experiment with their teaching styles in the classroom and perhaps experience some failures as they attempt to find out

what works for them in certain situations. In the long run, however, I am convinced this approach creates more confident and better teachers.

Once a department actually adopts this attitude and makes this kind of relationship between full-time faculty and graduate instructors a reality, the rest is comparatively easy. There are dozens of more prescriptive articles which identify the essential elements for any teaching assistant training program and provide models for such instruction. Without the proper attitude and support of the faculty and without general agreement on the importance of teaching and advising as opposed to training and supervising, such programs will never reach their full potential for the graduate instructors involved.

Evaluation of the Program

Although a discussion of evaluation would typically come after a description of any program, it is such a pervasive element of our program that it is appropriate to discuss it here. After our pre-registration workshop for new graduate instructors, we ask everyone involved to provide a written evaluation. Four full-time faculty, four experienced graduate instructors, and nearly fifty new graduate instructors are directly involved in every minute of the workshop. The rest of the faculty are involved in parts of the activities and presentations and the late Saturday afternoon party which ends the activity. All participants evaluate the workshop in terms of what was most effective, least effective not clear, most necessary, most helpful, and so on from their own perspective.

Those written evaluations form the basis for much of the content of the weekly seminars which continue throughout the semester. The workshop evaluation is followed by an informal mid-term evaluation and another written evaluation of the weekly sessions at the end of the semester. These evaluations are used by the teaching staff to adjust the schedule of the weekly sessions and to plan the sessions for the following year. Although evaluation is frequently viewed

as the final activity of an educational interaction, we view it as an initial and continual activity. Most importantly, we view the evaluation as important and use it to continually revise our program.

The Pre-Service Workshop

Our pre-service workshop for all new graduate instructors runs for three or four days the week prior to the beginning of fall classes. Each new instructor is placed in an advisory group with 12-15 peers and two advisory group leaders, a full-time faculty member and an experienced graduate instructor who applied for the position and was competitively selected by the faculty. Our goals for this workshop are similar to others across the country. We want the *new* graduate instructors to begin to think of themselves as members of our faculty, as colleagues who share an important task in the operation of our department. We also want to help reduce their anxiety about teaching and make them aware of the basic expectations for the course. The workshop also fulfills an important social function. The new graduate instructors are joining a very large faculty and many feel intimidated and lost with 145 colleagues. The smaller advisory groups, however, give them a much more meaningful support group and identity.

The initial impression of any situation is critically important and we try to make the new graduate instructors feel welcome and relaxed. After getting to know the other members of their advisory group we bring them together and get right to the issues which are most important to them at this time — how and when they will get their first paycheck, information about parking permits, offices, mailboxes, and fall registration. Once we get some of the “essentials” out of the way, we begin talking about the course and our general expectations. Throughout the workshop, we attempt to model the behavior we want them to try in their classrooms with an emphasis on group discussion and participation from all involved. All instructors are expected to prepare a “course mechanics” statement for their students and their

advisor during the first week of classes. A departmental attendance policy and the name of the director of student affairs must be on this statement. Rather than tell them exactly what else they should include, we give them four or five sample statements which our teachers have used in the past. We do the same when talking about the first unit in the course. Three or four experienced graduate instructors talk about what they do for the first three weeks and hand out sample teaching materials. By now the new graduate instructors are aware of the wide diversity of approaches which can be found in teaching the basic course.

All of this can be very frustrating to the new instructors. Some want to be told what to teach, when, and how to teach it. Although that is sometimes tempting and would frequently be easier for all of us, it does little to help the instructors become better teachers. This approach forces all of us to think seriously about the goals and objectives we as teachers establish for our course. It forces us to examine the activities and assignments in light of those objectives and to constantly be aware of the needs of our students. With a prescribed syllabus and required text, assignments, and exams, much of that process is lost. The instructors are merely acting out the script we have prepared for them. We are very open about the risk we are taking and continue to develop the informal and encouraging atmosphere which is critical to the success of our approach. We are attempting to establish a program where the new graduate instructors have a great deal of responsibility for their classes, where they truly are something more than teaching assistants. They must think about how they will teach it. Whenever possible, we try to give them examples of the range of approaches available but refuse to be prescriptive on most matters.

We also cover the traditional content and methodological issues most pre-service workshops focus on such as responding to student speeches and papers and leading discussions. The workshop is an experiential activity in that the graduate instructors complete writing and speaking assignments which are typical of those many will use with their freshmen during the first few weeks. While

there is naturally some apprehension about these activities, the evaluations have always been very positive. We discuss the difficulty of fulfilling the dual roles of graduate student and graduate instructor, a topic where the credibility of the experienced graduate instructor co-leader is a tremendous asset. They are also warned about the "seduction of teaching" and reminded that they must continue to concentrate on their graduate work even though their teaching will consume an enormous amount of their time and energy.

The role of experienced graduate instructors as co-leaders in the advisory groups is absolutely critical to the success of the program. They are competitively selected and paid an extra stipend for their participation in the workshop and the weekly seminars during the fall term. They are treated as "equal" co-leaders of their advisory groups and have equal status with the full-time faculty in planning and running the sessions. This is the first place where the new graduate instructors see that we are serious about the role we want them to play in our program. Everything we do in the workshop is designed to help the new graduate instructors become valuable and contributing members of our faculty.

The In-Service Seminar

All new graduate instructors meet weekly for a two credit hour seminar taught by the advisory group leaders. Providing graduate level credit for the seminar provides additional support for our commitment to teaching for the graduate instructors and the faculty. A typical session for the new graduate instructors might begin with everyone meeting together for coffee and announcements and perhaps discussion of general issues such as mid-term reports. Most of our weekly seminars allow the advisory groups to meet separately to share what the graduate instructors have been doing in class and what they plan to do for the next week or two. We continue to work on the content of their classes and discuss issues such as responding to student papers and speeches, how to lead a discussion of an essay, and how to

structure assignments to meet the goals of the program. We put off the discussion of grading as long as possible since we prefer instructors not grade student work for the first few weeks. We endorse the full range of grading philosophy from those who grade virtually everything to those who do not assign a grade to any single piece of student work but use a more holistic approach to determine mid-term and final grades. Again, the focus in our discussion of these topics is on providing a range of teaching behavior with the various advocates explaining their procedures, limitations, and benefits. We want our teachers to develop a system which best matches their teaching personalities, abilities and experience.

Around mid-term, all graduate instructors provide their teaching advisor with three student files containing speech outlines, notes, and instructor and peer responses, rough draft and finished papers, quizzes, and any other material handed out by the instructor or written by the student. The advisor responds to those files, commenting on the appropriateness, quality and number of the assignments as well as the quality of the instructor comments and grades. The files allow the advisor to look closely at the work of three students in each class taught by the graduate instructors. Since we ask them to select files which will demonstrate a range of performance, we can also comment on the degree to which we agree with their assessment of the student work. While the experienced graduate students do not receive credit for their participation at this point, it is a part of the condition for reappointment. The faculty advisors are given credit for this work as part of their teaching load. This activity also allows the graduate instructor to ask the advisor for help in responding to the work of a student who is doing poorly or situations which are causing problems for the instructor. The advisors provide written responses to these materials for the graduate instructors and place copies in their departmental files.

This process is repeated at the end of each semester and the advisor responses along with other materials which may have been gathered concerning the teaching of the graduate instructors are placed in their departmental files. Although

we do not require classroom visitations, the advisors frequently observe the graduate instructors upon request. We also encourage peer visitation and the use of our videotaping equipment to examine teaching. Our new graduate instructors are asked to keep a journal of their teaching, focusing on description and evaluation. Many continue to keep such a journal throughout their professional careers. We also use a standard student evaluation of teaching form at the end of each semester. One part is the typical forced-choice questionnaire which gives us the departmental data we need for administrative purposes and the other is an open-ended form which generally proves much more valuable for each individual instructor. The graduate instructors are free to place whatever material they want from class handouts to student evaluations to responses to their advisors' comments in their departmental files. Our goal is to create a record of their success in the classroom through the use of peer comments, advisor responses, student evaluations, and self-evaluations and descriptions over several semesters. This process is effective when we act as advisors and teachers and treat the graduate instructors as colleagues. There is little evidence to suggest it would work as effectively if we were merely trainers and supervisors.

Summary

The key element in establishing an effective Professional Development Program is the development of an appropriate atmosphere where the graduate instructors know they are viewed as valuable members of the faculty. That can only be done with the full cooperation and participation of the full-time faculty. Graduate instructors must be given freedom and responsibility and support. They need to know that the department values teaching and respects their contributions. The planning for next year's program is a continual process requiring the involvement of the graduate instructors who are currently on the staff. What did they appreciate and value from what you did this year? What did they need that they did not receive and what would

they recommend for future sessions? The pre-service workshop ought to directly involve experienced graduate instructors and the majority of the faculty. The workshop and the weekly seminar meetings should be presented as necessary and valuable for the professional development of the entire faculty.

Offering graduate credit for the graduate instructors and making it part of the teaching load for the full-time faculty helps establish it as a viable and important activity which is valued and rewarded by the department. While there obviously are certain content and methodological issues which may be predetermined, the program must retain the flexibility to respond to the needs of the graduate instructors it serves. Instructors must be given degrees of freedom in the classroom if they are to learn their own skills, strengths, and limitations as teachers. We must allow them to go beyond acting out the scripts we have prepared for them if they are to grow as educators. Treating graduate instructors as colleagues and involving them in the process, giving them power and freedom, and valuing the teaching they do benefits the students, the graduate instructors, the faculty, and the university.

References

Much of the descriptive portion of this presentation is drawn from an earlier paper on this topic (Trank 1989). The Professional Development Program at the University of Iowa has evolved to its present state over the past decade.

Andrews, Patricia. 1983. "Creating a Supportive Climate for Teaching Growth: Developing Graduate Students as Teachers." *Communication Quarterly* 31: 259-265.

Chism, Nancy Van Note and Susan B. Warner, eds. 1987. "Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants: Readings from a National Conference." Center for Teaching Excellence, The Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio.

- Gibson, James W., Michael S. Hanna, and Bill M. Huddleston. 1985. "The Basic Course at U.S. Colleges and Universities: IV." *Communication Education* 34: 281-291.
- Journet, Debra. 1983. "Preparing Teachers of Technical Writing." *Technical Writing Teacher* 7: 1-6.
- Kaufman-Everett, Ileen, and Philip M. Backlund. 1980. "A Descriptive Study of Speech Education Programs for Novice Instructors." *Association for Communication Administration Bulletin* 31: 47-52.
- Krupa, Gene H. 1982. "Helping New Teachers of Writing: Book, Model, and Mirror." *College Composition and Communication* 33: 442-445.
- Lehr, Fran. 1983. "Teaching Teacher to Teach Writing." *English Education* 15: 53-57.
- Moore, Linda. 1984. "Orientation for First Time Teaching Assistants: A Course Approach." Midwest Basic Course Director's Conference. Youngstown, Ohio.
- Seiler, William J. and Marilyn Fuss-Reineck. 1986. "Developing the Personalized System of Instruction for the Basic Speech Communication Course." *Communication Education* 35: 126-133.
- Staton-Spicer, Ann Q., and Cheryl R. Marty-White. 1981. "A Framework for Instructional Communication Theory: The Relationship Between Teacher Communication Concerns and Classroom Behavior." *Communication Education* 30: 354-366.
- Schaefer, Shelly. 1985. "Beyond the Basic Course: The Social and Emotional Needs of Graduate Students. Midwest Basic Course Director's Conference. Indianapolis, Indiana.
- Trank, Douglas M. 1984. "An Overview of Present Approaches to the Basic Speech Communication Course." *Association for Communication Administration Bulletin* 52: 86-89.

- Trank, Douglas M. 1987. "A Professional Development Program for Graduate Instructors in Communication and Composition. *Resources in Education, ERIC, ED 277, 052.*
- Trank, Douglas, M. 1989. "Training or Teaching: A Professional Development Program for Basic Course Instructors. Central States Communication Association Convention. Kansas City, Missouri.
- Wright, David W. 1980. "A Basic Course Director's View of the Instructional Staff's Training Needs, Problems, and Solutions." Midwest Basic Course Director's Conference. Bloomington, Indiana.
- Yingling, Julie M. 1984. "Training the First-Time Teaching Assistant: An Adaptation of the Friedrich/Powell Program." Midwest Basic Course Director's Conference. Youngstown, Ohio.
- Yoder, Donald D. 1982. "Teaching the Non-Speech Teacher to Teach Speech: The Use of Peer Training." Midwest Basic Course Director's Conference. Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Teaching Basic Courses: Problems and Solutions

Richard L. Weaver, II

Howard W. Cotrell

Basic course teachers operate in a frustrating environment. Their courses are often required. Numerous students are likely to be involved in the courses. Demands for excellence come from students who don't want to waste their time, from other disciplines who want a high degree of rigor if they are to continue having their students take the course, from colleagues who recognize that the basic course is a major recruiting arena for majors, and from administrators who know that basic courses are the bread and butter of the college's offerings. There is no doubt that much pressure for success and effectiveness rests on the shoulders of the basic course teacher.

In this paper, we will focus on five recurring problems that have plagued this basic course teacher of fifteen years. We will phrase these problems in terms of the continuum that seems to define them: 1) rigor versus leniency, 2) dependence versus independence, 3) theory versus skills, 4) being close versus being distant, and 5) objective evaluation versus subjective evaluation. All are likely to have a direct effect on the motivation of both instructor and students. Some of the ways we have attempted to solve the problems may provide insights for others teaching basic courses.

The problems discussed are not problems that can be solved during the initial construction of a course. Most recur periodically and need to be adjusted and reconsidered — *some* year in and year out! Some, too, can never be totally resolved — at least to the satisfaction of everyone. This lack

of total resolution creates some of the ongoing frustration with the problems.

Rigor Versus Leniency

Many students feel that basic courses should be designed to entice, not turn away, students; that they are generally uninteresting and unbeneficial; and that basic courses should help, not hinder, student progress. If we define "rigor" as "strictness" (Weaver and Cotrell 1988a) then the problem of basic-course teachers is their attempts to be rigorous but fair, challenging but not too challenging, and difficult but not impossible.

In contrast to the feelings of students cited above, there are students who feel that rigor makes them work harder, prevents procrastination, results in more efficient courses, creates a challenge to learn, forces them to do their assignments, and gives directions to classes (9-10). The contrast between the two points of view highlights the potential frustration. One student expressed the problem well when he said:

"I felt an excessive amount of work was required, and it made it a little difficult to absorb. Much of what was said sunk in, but I would like to have had a more laid-back atmosphere but not too laid back."

"Laid-back . . . but not too laid back" is indeed the frustration. You can please some of the students all of the time, and you can please all of the student some of the time; but you can't please all of the students all of the time! Perhaps this is a way to rationalize the frustration: We do the best we can considering the circumstances, knowing that everyone will not be happy with all of our decisions.

There are several things basic-course teachers can do to maintain rigor in their courses. They can keep their expectations high; detail specific criteria to be met on each assignment with the criteria set high; require, expect, and reward a high level of creativity; provide a high-quality role model; and offer some compensation for rigor such as

friendship or some special attention, relevant skill development, provision of rewards, reinforcement, and feedback, or supplying the opportunity for students to perform well in a rigorous and challenging course or department.

We have found that when standards are set high from the outset, when courses are clearly outlined at the beginning, and when expectations are specifically detailed at the start of each major assignment, students perform better. Also, when this is accomplished, it becomes easier for teachers to adapt, change, or pull back, as the needs of the class dictate. Teachers must be sensitive to student needs. But keeping in contact does not guarantee adaptation and change. Teachers must remember that good teaching requires both rigor and willingness to draw back from rigor.

Independence Versus Dependence

One important goal of the basic course is to foster independence in students. To bring them to a point where they can and do think for themselves, make proper decisions and act on them, and confront and resolve problems in an intelligent and mature manner, should be a priority. This desire is no less important for a basic-course teacher than for other teachers. In some cases, however, it may be a frustrated desire — frustrated because of the needs in basic, multisectioned courses such as: strict and specific assignment guidelines, the need for consistency between sections, and the nature of basic skill-oriented assignments.

Wilbert J. McKeachie, Director of the University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching, and author of *Teaching Tips* argues (1986),

"Many students have conflicting motives. One common conflict is between independence and dependence. This means that students are likely to resent the teacher who directs their activities too closely, but they also are likely to be anxious when given independence; so that teachers have the neat trick of finding ways of simultaneously satisfying both needs" (p. 224).

Students' need for more independence or for more dependence is likely to be a product of their personality, training, and expectations. Those needs vary dramatically between students. For example, dependent students show little intellectual curiosity, learn only what is required, see teachers and peers as sources of structure and support, look to their authority figures for guidelines, like to be told what to do, prefer teacher outlines, notes on slides or written on the blackboard, clear deadlines for assignment, and teacher-centered classroom methods (Kozma, et al. 86-88). These characteristics are amenable to the basic course.

Independent students like to think for themselves. They prefer to work on their own, and they learn the content *they* feel is important and are confident of their learning abilities. Independent students desire independent study, self-paced instruction, problems that give them an opportunity to think for themselves, projects which students design, and a student-centered rather than a teacher-centered classroom. With respect to structured basic courses, many of these traits run directly contrary to what often is or can be expected in large basic courses — especially in those with multiple sections taught with a large lecture and small performance sections.

Contrary statements of students illustrate the problem. In a tightly structured basic course, one said, "This was a well organized class." Another said, "Class is too structured, unable to be flexible for all students. In the teaching profession, the top teachers are able to adjust to the students' needs and desires." Precisely. Good teachers would have to agree with the second student's comments. Flexibility is essential. But flexibility when handling a large number of students is difficult.

How do basic-course teachers perform the neat trick of satisfying both dependency and independency needs? It is likely to be a perpetual problem because learning styles vary. No single approach will satisfy everyone. One approach is to do both: offer students structure, then within that structure, try to provide sufficient room for independent work. For example, to provide students more independence, we have a number of related optional assignments in addition to what

are required in the course that interest students. They may do a special report on a visiting speaker, analyze a written speech, or do a paper on a movement, rally, or event that involves a number of speech-communication activities. Sometimes their findings are reported back to the class as a whole; sometimes they take place between student and teacher.

Whenever possible, students are gathered in groups to determine the focus, parameters, or criteria for upcoming assignments. Even though they are not determining whether or not the assignment should exist, they are selecting important governing ideas — like how many sources must be consulted, the range of topics, or the criteria that should make up evaluations of forthcoming speeches. In this way, they are offering important input, and they feel like they are part of the planning of the course.

Another way to approach the problem of independence versus dependence is to focus on independent goals whenever possible — such as specific skills. We try to have individual counseling sessions with each student that deal with her or his own communication strengths and weaknesses. We try to give each student specific, individual areas to work on — or “growth goals.” These make them feel independent. Teachers then tie those specific skills, or “growth goals,” into overall class goals. Growth goals are related to greater success in interpersonal, small-group, or public communication activities. Individual (independent) choices can be made within the class (dependent) structure.

Theory Versus Skills

There are some major problems in basic courses with respect to the theory-performance split. First, if the course is conducted primarily by beginning teachers, how well grounded in theory are they? This is often a problem in basic courses. Second, are undergraduate students required to attend lectures where some theory can be shared? Does the textbook adequately make theory clear and available? Third, is performance accomplished for its own sake, or is it guided

by the theory in the course? Performance *not* guided by theory is *likely* to reinforce prior habits, some of which may be weak. Given a choice, teachers need a combination of theory and skills. In determining which activities should be retained, they should keep those directly tied into the theory and eliminate any others.

Once again, the theory-performance frustration is underscored by student open-ended evaluations. One said, "We didn't seem to really learn practical skills. It was more the theory." In this student's mind, the written material far outweighed the skills activities of the course. Another student in this same course reinforced this point of view by saying, "It is ridiculous that in a speech class the emphasis is on written work not the actually speaking portion. I do not feel I improved at all on my speaking abilities because there was little instruction given on it." Although understandable, to believe that there can be dramatic improvement in speaking skills in one semester is unlikely. Most students have been speaking for 18-22 years prior to the one-term basic speech course. Weak communication skills have been well entrenched.

Other students in the same basic course, however, took a contrary position. One said, "This course has helped me in my speaking abilities as well as in communicating with others in general." Another said, "The one thing I gained in this course was the speeches and the practice I had giving them in front of people."

The frustration for the basic course instructor comes from not knowing which emphasis, theory or skills, will benefit most students the most. How is one to know for certain which decision is the best one? The guideline suggested above is helpful; plan to share basic theories, then select activities that directly relate to those theories. Performances guided by theory are likely to have the most long-range effect and retention possibilities.

In our own desire to approach the theory versus performance issue, we consulted the latest survey of speech communication departments (Gibson, et al. 1985). In their article, "The Basic Speech Course at U.S. Colleges and Universities," the authors discovered the following:

"Of the 515 respondents to this item [the ratio of theory to performance], slightly more than half indicated that their instruction consists of 30 to 40% theory. Another 19% reported a 50:50 ratio of theory and practice. This distribution suggests that the majority of basic course directors prefer a balanced course with moderate emphasis on performance assignments" (p. 285).

We have found this ratio, 30 to 40% theory with about 60% performance, to be reasonable. With this in mind, all the activities — two interpersonal exercises, two small-group exercises, and two public speeches — equal to 50% of students' grades. We give individual teachers 10% of students' grades to use for attitude and participation. Finally, we administer the three exams — one on each of the three sections of the hybrid course — equal to 40% of students' grades. In that way we achieved, as closely as we could, the 40% theory and 60% performance distribution.

Being Close Versus Being Distant

To continue being happy and contented with *any* job requires some positive reinforcement and encouragement. One could say that "being close" is irrelevant to a teacher's mission. One could also say that being close and being distant are *not* incompatible: one can be both close and sufficiently distant! Both may be possible. The frustration for the instructor occurs in treading that very narrow ground between being friendly and open [close] versus being properly cool and aloof [distant]. The problem is compounded when treading the line between being high-tech and being high-touch.

We contend that when students feel teachers are "close" to them in age, interests, or appeal, they tend to be more responsive to them and are likely to learn more; thus, being close is important to effective teaching and learning. One student expressed this feeling: "Be more concerned with us as individuals. You are too strict and need to reevaluate how you teach." Another said, "Your attitude tends to make you

unapproachable. I understand the importance of having a structured class, but I think it took away from the professor being a human being." Still another said, "I'm glad we have teaching assistants because at least someone seems understanding and is on our side." In these comments, students felt the teacher was removed and aloof — distant.

To illustrate the need to be human, notice the importance placed on caring by one student: "Your patience and open-mindedness greatly impressed me after our misunderstanding about my dyadic-encounter paper early this semester. I fully appreciate your position and respect a professor who cares enough to follow through as you did — even with the large number of students that you have." This student felt the teacher was close because he or she empathized with his or her position. Basic course teachers must show compassion and humanness whenever possible because their position as teacher, alone, leads students to believe they don't care, that they have no compassion, and that they are not human.

The problem with high-tech versus high-touch underscores the same problem. As one moves toward slides, videotapes, movies, computers, or televising lectures or classes, one moves *away* from direct contact with students. High-touch means high-contact [closeness]. Once again, teachers must monitor their dependence on technology simply because the more technology, the more distance between themselves and their students.

There are a number of ways for achieving the balance between being close and being distant. Basic course teachers should make their classroom a forum for revealing humanness. Some approaches might include 1) just being warm, pleasant, and good natured, 2) helping students understand material, assignments, exams, and the course, 3) striving to open avenues for communication between the students and the director, 4) pausing before and after class to talk with students, 5) making one's office hours known and encouraging students to stop in, 6) sharing interesting and humorous personal stories to reveal personal humanness, 7) letting students know that you read their material, attend their movies and events, and listen to their music, and 8)

trying not to appear so perfect. Students need to see their basic course teacher as a human being.

Distance is also important. It is difficult to be fair and objective with friends. Thus, when teachers befriend students, it becomes harder to evaluate and grade them. We encourage teachers *not* to have students address them by their first names. To be on a first-name basis suggests friendship or closeness. To be addressed as Ms., Mr., Mrs., or Dr. provides some distance — albeit artificial. Maintain standards, being on time, prepared, organized, and motivated — a clear and distinct professionalism — also helps in preserving distance. One feature of speech-communication courses that appears consistent across our profession is that, for the most part, they promote closeness — a warm, personal, supportive environment. We are not suggesting that this environment should be discouraged, we are simply suggesting that it promotes an air of extreme closeness. When students get a lower grade than desired in such an environment, they feel betrayed; trust has been broken. The goal is to promote the environment *and* keep the distance — a neat trick.

Objective Evaluation Versus Subjective Evaluation

The problem of evaluation in a basic course is a difficult one and offers a source of serious and on-going frustration for every instructor. Here, it is our opinion, one is damned if one does it one way and damned if one does it another. The problem is compounded by the large numbers of students in our basic courses. There are also a number of subjective issues.

For some, including these teachers, objective versus subjective is *not* a major issue; that decision was made fifteen years ago and has been consistently supported and maintained. But students do not appreciate the decision. Some say the tests are too specific: "I don't see why you need to ask specific questions verbatim from the book. I thought comprehension was the goal, not memorization." When we

used broader questions, one response was, "Your tests are unfair. They ask for our opinions on concepts and issues. We do not have the knowledge to make such judgments." In testing, our move from broad questions to more specific ones has been slow, but, in general, students do poorly on broad, conceptual questions.

Because of the number of students in the course, we use no short-answer or essay questions. We do not have the time to grade them. Even the possibility of having graduate teaching assistants grade such questions is prohibitive since their first goal is to get a degree and already their workload is taxing. Also, having them grade short-answer or essay questions leads to potential inequity and inconsistency between sections. In grading such examinations, some people grade easily; some grade hard. Common, multiple-choice exam provides teaching assistants with an additional objective outside evaluation component that is added to students' other course experiences.

The second issue in objective versus subjective evaluating concerns competitive grading versus grading an objective scale. We use both. Competitive grading is an element in our peer-evaluating portion of the course (Weaver and Cotrell 1986; Weaver and Cotrell 1989). On the exams we grade against an objective scale: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; 60-69 = D; below 59 = F. At times we have been more generous. We have found that with an effective, well-designed test, and close to 1,000 students, the breakdown on the objective scale generally follows a normal, bell-shaped curve. Although we spend more than five pages in our workbook explaining the grading philosophy, process, and scale, students' questions and concerns persist. These results occur with respect to our use of peer evaluation, but much occurs, too, simply because our standards are high.

The next issue in the objective versus subjective evaluation problem is the weight given the examinations in the overall scheme of the course. They are the most objective portion. The subjective part includes the grades on the papers, activities, outlines, and speeches given by teaching assistants. If the exams are easy, students do not mind them

counting substantially; if tough, they either do not want them counted much or not counted at all. The frustration comes when students do very well in the subjective part and very poorly in the objective part. When it is the objective portion that causes them to get a "C" rather than a "B" or a "B" rather than an "A," their complaints are loud and persistent. One element here is that teachers of the performance sections, for the most part, tend to be easy graders. This means that students tend to do better in the subjective portion of the course. With objective exams, graded on an objective scale, grades tend to balance teacher's subjective assessments. Students, however, do not like the balance!

The real issue in objective versus subjective evaluation is trying to obtain objective consistency in grading between sections. We have fifty sections of twenty students each. Since we cannot get into the heads of teachers, there is no way to obtain total consistency. No matter what we have done, we have received some student complaints, but the complaints have been significantly reduced. We have approached the problem from two directions. First, we laid out the specific criteria for each major graded assignment carefully and precisely. These are provided in the student workbook required for the course, and they are followed by all basic-course teachers. Second, we constructed a uniform, consistent evaluation form for each assignment that all instructors and students use. These forms are also contained in the workbook. Laying out criteria and constructing evaluation forms takes time, but we have reduced the "inconsistency" comments dramatically by taking this time.

Summary

Although there are a number of issues that are a source of constant frustration for basic-course teachers, these teachers continue to find the course, the students, and the job challenging, interesting, and rewarding. The issues of rigor versus leniency, independence versus dependence, theory versus skills, being close versus being distant, and objective

versus subjective evaluation, do not disappear. These issues nag, haunt, and frustrate. Our goal is still to do the best we can with the most students we can.

What it really comes down to is how effectively can we walk the fine line of balance between each dichotomy. The problem is that to satisfy the largest number of students we need both. To strive for an ideal, as teachers, it is likely that a balance is appropriate on each of these issues. *How* to achieve the balance is the question. The best way we have discovered for establishing the balance is to set up the course initially with balance in mind. Then, as the course proceeds, from term to term, we alter and adjust (fine tune) our position and approach to each of these issues based on the open-ended course evaluations students provide and any other monitoring that is possible. For example, we have begun to place specific questions at the end of the final exam on issues of student concern in the course. On these questions we get frequencies from the computer, and based on student responses, we can continue to monitor and fine tune.

As long-time basic course teachers, we have lived with frustration. There is no way to please all the students all the time. To run a competent, worthwhile, rigorous required course, one must learn to live with — and, perhaps, compensate for — the frustration that will surely be present. That is why, despite our best intentions, our best interests, and our best presentation, when it comes to students' perceptions of basic course teachers, it's often a question of whether or not you have the proper solution to their current problem! Sometimes you do; sometimes you don't.

References

- Gibson, James W., Michael S. Hanna, and Bill M. Huddleston. October 1985. "The Basic Speech Course at U.S. Colleges and Universities: IV." *Communication Education* 34: 281-291.

- Kozma, Robert B., Lawrence W. Belle, and George W. Williams. 1978. *Instructional Techniques in Higher Education*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications.
- McKeachie, Wilbert J. 1986. *Teaching Tips: A Guidebook for the Beginning College Instructor*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Co.
- Weaver, Richard L. II and Howard N. Cotrell. Fall/Winter 1986. "Peer Evaluation: A Case Study." *Innovative Higher Education* 11: 25-39.
- Weaver, Richard L. II and Howard W. Cotrell. 1988a. "Rigor in the Basic Course: A Question of Balance." Speech Communication Association of Ohio, Columbus, OH.
- Weaver, Richard L. II and Howard N. Cotrell. Spring 1988b. "Mental Aerobics: The Dock of the Bay." *Educational Horizons* 66: 129-132.
- Weaver, Richard L. II and Howard W. Cotrell. 1989. "Peer Evaluation in the Basic Speech Courses: A Student Supported Process." *World Communication* (in press).

Author Identification

Nancy L. Buerkel-Rothfuss (Ph.D., Michigan State University, 1978) is Professor and Area Coordinator of Interpersonal and Public Communication at Central Michigan University where she also directs the basic course. Her research interests include communication education, family communication, interpersonal communication, and media socialization. She has edited one basic course text, *Communication: Competencies and Contexts*, and is presently coediting a book on media and adolescent sex with Bradley S. Greenberg and Jane Brown. A textbook on family communication, which she co-authored with Janet Yerby and Arthur P. Bochner, will be published in 1990. Other publications include articles on teaching methodology, affinity-seeking, and effects of media on social reality, parent-adolescent communication, and the effects of media on family interaction.

Howard W. Cotrell (M.S., Purdue University, 1967) is Associate Professor in the Instructional Media Center at Bowling Green State University. He is an instructional facilitator — one who offers assistance, guidance, and support to other faculty at Bowling Green. With Richard L. Weaver II, he has written more than thirty articles in the area of instructional communication and instructional development.

Pamela L. Gray (Ph.D., The Pennsylvania State University, 1984) is Associate Professor of Interpersonal and Public Communication and Theatre and Interpretation at Central Michigan University. Her research interest primarily is in the area of communication and theatre education. Her publications include an Instructor's Manual for *Communication: Competencies and Contexts* (Co-authored with Nancy L. Buerkel-Rothfuss) and an article on instructional formats in the basic course in *Communication Education* (co-authored with Nancy L. Buerkel-Rothfuss and Janet Yerby). Current research projects include instructional methodology innovations and the training of graduate teaching assistants.

Karen J. Greenberg (Ph.D., University of Massachusetts, 1987) edited *Conversations on Communication Ethics*. She is currently

writing *Introduction to Communication Ethics: Illumination of a Pas de Deux for Rhetoric and Philosophy*. Her ongoing research interests include the history of the theory of the ethical dimension of communication, the contemporary institution manifestations of communication ethics. In 1989, Greenberg was appointed NEH Summer Visiting Fellow in the Department of Classics at Princeton University.

William A. Haskins (Ph.D., University of Oregon, 1977) is an Associate Professor of Speech Communication at McKendree College. His publications include one book and over twenty journal articles. His research interests lie in the areas of public address, legal communication and organizational communication. He also provides communication training and consultation.

Drew McGukin (Ph.D., University of Nebraska, 1986) is an Assistant Professor at Auburn University-Montgomery. His research interests include classroom communication and interpersonal relationships.

Don B. Morlan (Ph.D., Purdue University, 1969) is Professor and Chair of the Department of Communication at the University of Dayton. His research interests include communication in the family and issues related to the administration of communication programs in colleges and universities.

Lynn A. Phelps (Ph.D., University of Southern California, 1972) is Professor of Communication at Ohio University. His research interests include interpersonal communication, relationship termination and outplacement programs.

William J. Seiler (Ph.D., Purdue University, 1971) is Professor of Speech Communication, Curriculum & Instruction, and Director of the Basic Speech Communication Course at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. His research interests include classroom communication and basic speech communication course instruction. He is known for his development, use and research of the Personalized System of Instruction method in the basic course.

Michael Smilowitz (Ph.D., University of Utah, 1985) is an Associate Professor of Communication Studies in the Department of English at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte. His research interests include supervisory communication, conflict and argument, technology's impact on communicative processes, and speech pedagogy.

Roger D. Smitter (Ph.D., The Ohio State University) is an Associate Professor of Speech Communication at North Central College. His research interests include undergraduate curriculum development and case study methods for the classroom.

Richard W. Thomas (M.A., University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1978) is a Ph.D. candidate (ABD) at the University of Illinois and an instructor of Interpersonal and Public Communication at Central Michigan University. His research interests include interpersonal communication, organizational communication, small group communication, leadership, communication theory, and communication education.

Douglas M. Trank (Ph.D., University of Utah, 1973) is Professor and Chair of the Rhetoric Department at the University of Iowa where he also serves on the faculties of the College of Education and the Department of Communication Studies. He teaches and researches primarily in the areas of communication education and the basic course, and has served on the editorial boards of *Communication Education* and *Communication Studies*. He has served on various basic course committees and is currently President-elect of the Central States Communication Association.

Sam Wallace (Ph.D., The Ohio State University, 1985) is an Assistant Professor of Communication and director of the basic course at the University of Dayton. His research interests include small group processes and the potential influence of mass communication on real-life family conflict management and problem solving.

Richard L. Weaver, II (Ph.D., Indiana University, 1969) is Professor of Interpersonal and Public Communication at Bowling Green State University. He is director of the basic hybrid speech communication course at Bowling Green. His publications include nearly 25 books (including all editions) and over 85 articles. His research interests are in instructional communication.

Call for Papers

The Basic Course Committee of the Speech Communication Association welcomes submissions to be considered for *The Basic Course Annual II* to be published in 1990. All submissions must follow the MLA Styleguide (3rd Edition) or they will be returned to the author. Please send a 70- to 100-word abstract of your research along with the manuscript. In addition, send along an author identification page following the format in this volume.

Each manuscript will be sent out for blind review. Please be sure all author/institution affiliation is removed from the text of the manuscript. Send four (4) copies of your manuscript to:

Lawrence W. Hugenberg, Editor
The Basic Course Annual
Department of Speech Communication & Theatre
Youngstown State University
Youngstown, Ohio 44555-3633

All submissions must be complete and postmarked no later than March 15, 1990. All late submissions will be returned.